AN ADDRESS TO Protestants Of All PERSUVASIONS;

More Especially the

Magistracy and Clergy,

For the Promotion of

Virtue and Charity.

In Two Parts. By *W. P.* a *Protestant*.

The *Second Edition*, Corrected and Enlarged.

2 Pet. 5. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Giving all diligence, add to your Faith, Vertue: and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly kindness; and to Brotherly kindness, Charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things, is blind, and cannot see far off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

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THE PREFACE.

THE Acceptance this *Addreſs* has found, with all ſorts of People to whoſe hands it has come, who value Religion for the ſake of *Piety* more then out of Intereſt or Formality, hath brought it a ſecond time to publick view.

It was writ in the Year 1679. as a *Chriſtian Expedient for Peace and Safety*: But our *Animoſities* were then too great to conſider of the beſt means to obtain them; which ſtood, and does, and will ever ſtand in a *thorow Reformation of our Heart s and Lives*: Elſe God, that cannot lye in the ways of his Providence, will undoubtedly meet with us, as he has often done, and yet will do to our great Confuſion, if we do not ſpeedily Repent

and forſake thoſe courſes by which he is provoked againſt us. The deſign of the Author, was that of *Chriſtianity*, to mend the Spirits and Lives of Men, by ſhowing the *Odiouſneſs of Sin, the Vanity of Self, and Beauty of Virtue*, with the lamentable Conſequences that never fail to attend the one, and the advantages that always follow the other, whereever they are entertained, both to Privat Perſons & Governments, to Church and State. In which, as he went to the bottom and dealt plainly with every Party, ſo he did it without any Animoſity to their Perſons; and ſhows he labour'd their Reformation, affectionatly, truly and thorowly; both by letting them ſee the Snares they have fallen by, and how to get out of them.

Three Words may be ſaid to comprehend this whole Treatiſe. VICE, PRESUMPTION and VIOLENCE; for under them is compriſed the matter

ter he ſtrikes at from firſt to laſt. They have their agreeable Contraries, *Virtue*, *Humility* and *Charity*, if not *Unity*. But we cannot come at them while the other ſtand in the way.

He has Expoſed **Vice** in its Deformities, and pointed to us the Inevitable and Diſmal Effects of it in thoſe Countries where it has prevailed: A ſeaſonable and informing Lecture for our own times; which he chiefly refers to the Civil Magiſtrate, whoſe Duty therein he ſhows and preſſes, with the next & proper means to ſuppreſs it: To wit, by a due Execution of our Juſt Laws upon the preſent vicious Livers, and a better Education of our *Youth*; that by preſerving them from the Infections of Vice, the next Generation at leaſt may have ſome better pretence to Vertue.

He is very cloſe, and perhaps ſharp upon PRESUMPTION *in Religion.*

This, he detects likewise, and the many Miſchiefs it has done to Chriſtian fellowſhip, and Civil Society too, by ſetting up *Mens Opinions* for *Articles of Faith and Tyes of Religious Communion*; Miſtaking the Nature of true Faith, and Debaſing Morality, in its work and weight in Religion; and ſubjecting Reaſon and Truth to the Reſults of Humane Authority. Whereby it has happened, that people have not had the Witneſs in themſelves for what they have embraced, nor their own Convictions to warrant their Conformity or Profeſſion, but an Anceſtor, a Miniſter, their Education, for the beſt Reaſon and Proof of their Confeſſion. And ſuch as could not frame themſelves to an eaſie compliance, but ſuffered Inquiry to take place of Authority, and would not allow an *Ipſe dixit*, or a Conſtables Staff for a ſufficient reſolution of their Scruples, have ſuffered deeply in their Perſons and Eſtates. Not

Not that I would have Church-Society or Authority to be diſpiſed; they that do ſo are much in the wrong: Let every thing have its due place and juſt ſhare; Parents, Education, Church-Power, *&c.* but let them have no more. Let God have his part, who is Soveraign of the Conſcience, and to whom every Knee muſt bow: And they that bow in point of Religion, without the Convictions of his Spirit, are rather Idolaters then Believers; to be ſure they are meerly Formaliſts, & guilty of that Implicite Faith and Blind Obedience, which at other times we make ſo great a fault, and a ſufficient Reaſon of ſeparation.

VIOLENCE, which is the laſt word, and that takes up the laſt part of this Diſcourſe, to which the *Preſumption*, before expreſt, naturally tends, is that *Coercive Power*, uſed by thoſe who are the ſtrongeſt Party, to Impoſe their

their Opinions and Formalities upon the reſt, at the Hazard of their Lives or Eſtates that refuſe to conform; tho' they Diſſent out of pure Conſcience to God: The Breaches, Ruine and Deſtraction that have followed upon Penal Laws for Religion, as they riſe from Creed-making, and the impatiency of men to bear diſſent from their own Opinions, are become the Scandal of *Chriſtianity* all over the World. Theſe two Words, *Preſumption* and *Violence*, are more immediately referred to the *Clergy* of all *perſwaſions*, every where, tho' their Hearers are invited to Examin themſelves how far they lie under the Guilt hereof, or are toucht with a diſpoſition to entertain the Spirit that leads to Perſecution about Religion. Nor does the Author charge it upon every one of the Clergy: But there the Faulty are reprehended, and the Ignorant inſtructed, and the Guiltleſs commended

and

and confirmed in their Moderation. And what is ſaid, of this kind, of the Clergy, may be yet as reaſonably ſaid of the Laity; for tho' 'tis true that the Civil Officers that often prove the moſt violent Executioners of Penal Laws for Religion, are from among them; yet it is as true that from among them alſo is found the moſt temperate and merciful Spirits, that will the leaſt touch with Cruelty, and are the moſt ſenſible of the Miſeries of the Perſecuted, and expreſs the greateſt compaſſion for them, and from whom at laſt, the beſt part of their relief comes. But to avoid Compariſons, and do what we can to be wholly upon the healing and truly reforming hand, it is greatly to be wiſhed that the *Practice of Piety* were the main End and ſcope of Men, the ſubject of their care and Emulation; and that their Hatred were to Things, not Perſons, to Sin and not Sinners.

If

If we were as captious at our own Actions as we are at other Peoples Faiths, we ſhould live better Lives and they would live better by us: For ſo Holineſs and Peace would be promoted. O that we could but once be perſwaded to think of working out our *own Salvation!* It is not knowing but doing that recommends us to God, gives us Peace, and fits us for Heaven. That were the ready way *to make our great Calling and Election ſure.* And what are we called to but to Holineſs, to Godlineſs, to Purity? which makes us fit to ſee God, and that fits us for Heaven: *For without Holineſs no man*, ſays the Apoſtle, *ſhall ſee the Lord.* He did not ſay without *Tongues*, without *Philoſophy*, or without being an *able Diſputant*, a *Critick*, a *Formaliſt* we ſhould not ſee the Lord; but *without Holineſs*: For it is the peculiar Priviledge of the *Pure in heart to ſee God*; who is alſo of *purer*

Eyes

Eyes then to behold Iniquity without Tribulation and Wrath. Let us then Humble our ſelves to his Voice, bow to his Will, and ſet our ſelves to love his Law and keep his Commandments. We may remember who it was that ſaid, *I have ſeen an End of all Perfection, but thy Commandments are exceeding broad.* There is a Glory, a Comfort, a Treaſure in them not to be equalled; but known only to thoſe that do obſerve them. For Wiſdom leads her Children in the *Ways of Righteouſneſs in the midſt of the Paths of Judgment, and cauſes them that love her to Inherit Subſtance, and ſhe fills their Treaſure. Riches and Honour and length of Days are in her hands,* and are the Portion ſhe often beſtows upon her Children: What then have we to do, but to hearken to her Voice, and turn at her reproof, that we may live? The Spirit of Wiſdom will be upon us, yea the Spirit of God and of

Glory

Glory will reſt upon us. An *Ornament*, a *Dignity* above that of *earthly Crowns* and *Diadems*. There were hopes of us, if we were but Religious in Earneſt; every one in his own way; not falſe, cold and unfaithful to what we pretend. I mean not *Exterious* now, but the *holy fear of God*, which all profeſs, and none truly have that live without an *Awful Senſe of his Will and Omnipreſence*. It is this that would teach us *Humility*, and That would bring us to divine *Charity* till *Unity* comes: Which certainly would be very pleaſing to God, very exemplary to the World, and Honourable for Religion, as well as comfortable for our ſelves: For Religion at Heart would exerciſe our Eyes more within then without, at home then abroad; and to conquer our Sins and Selves would be a ſatisfaction tranſcending that of victory over the Arguments and Perſons of our Adverſaries.

Have

Have we *Faith*? Let us add then *to our Faith Vertue*, or its good for nothing; *and to our Vertue Knowledge*, that it may be the more uſeful; *and to Knowledge Temperance*, that we be not conceited; *and to Temperance Patience*, leſt we faint by the way; *and to Patience Godlineſs*, that we be devoutly Religious; *and to Godlineſs Brotherly Kindneſs*, that our Zeal do not over-run Love and Fellowſhip; *and to Brotherly Kindneſs Charity*; the Top of all Vertues and Graces, without which Religion is a Cypher, a Bubble, an *Apparition* at moſt: No ſolid or valid thing. *Charity* is comprehenſive of all right Love. It reaches to God, to our Neighbour, and our ſelves, both inwardly and outwardly: It reaches to Heaven as well as to the Ends of the Earth. It loves all, and acts towards all upon a Principle of Love: yea it is that *Love*. *Charity*, ſays the Apo-

1 Cor. 13. 15. 6, 7, 8.

Apoſtle, *ſuffers long, and is kind: Charity envieth not: Charity vaunteth not it ſelf, is not puffed up, doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly, ſeeketh not her own, is not eaſily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth: Beareth* all things, *believeth* all things, *hopeth* all things, *endureth* all things. *Charity* never fails. Men are too often the worſe for their Wit, for their Learning, ay for their Religion too, if Charity does not humble and ſanctifie them. *Ye know not of what Spirit ye are*, ſaid the bleſſed Saviour of the World to ſome of his *over-Zealous* Diſciples. There is a falſe as well as a true Zeal, and by their Fruits we ſhall know them. True Zeal is againſt *Sin*, and ſhown beſt upon a man's ſelf, his own life and conduct: It is tempered with Wiſdom, and will not out ſhoot the mark, eſpecially towards others. But falſe Zeal is nothing but *Paſſion* in the name of Religion. It is Impatient,

Fro-

Froward, Angry and Revengeful. It can *Slander*, *Quarrel*, *Beat*, *Plunder* and *Kill* too, *and all for God's ſake.* Alas! their Zeal is the excuſe of their Choler; and for the moſt part, thoſe that are captivated with it, are worſe Livers than thoſe they ſo evily entreat; and at beſt, ſhow moſt buſie and concerned about the *outſide* of Religion. *David* was zealous, but not after this ſort; for tho' he tells us that *his Zeal for God's Houſe had eaten him up*, yet he never ſaid it had eaten up his Neighbours. That furious Zeal is ſtrictly forbid by Chriſt, the Great Lord of the *Chriſtian Religion.*

It will therefore do us no hurt, if we *Try* our own Spirits, and ſee with what Spirits we profeſs *Religion* & act for it. They that act not from Religion, can never act rightly for *Religion*; their Spirits muſt be wrong; let their Zeal ſwell as big as Mountains, *their* Faith can ne-

ver remove one: They build upon the *Sand*, and the fall of their building will be at laſt, as terrible to themſelves, as their Ignorant Zeal made it formerly burdenſom to others.

Well then, where ſhall we pitch the nature and buſineſs of Religion, under the various Notions and Shapes we find it wares among men, and that plainly & Intelligibly? And with our anſwer to this let us conclude this Preface.

Religion, in the Judgment of this Author, is *Living up to what a Man knows of the mind of God, and attending diligently upon that Light in himſelf which gives him that Knowledge of his Duty.*

This is the Gift of God by Chriſt that *enlightens every man that comes into the World*: This is the *Talent* that Men are entruſted with, to improve to the ſaving of their Souls. And the Apoſtle tells us, that *whatſoever may be known of God is manifeſted in them*

them, by this Light, because *whatever makes manifeſt is Light*. Peruſe *John* 1 9.3,21. *Rom.* 1. 19. *Epheſ.* 5. 13,14. He that knows and acquaints himſelf with this Holy Light in himſelf, that comes by Chriſt the great Light of the World, and brings his Deeds and Thoughts to it, and ſquares his Deſires and Will according to the manifeſtations and directions of it; will approve himſelf a Diſciple of Chriſt, a Lover of Religion, and therefore a Religious man indeed: The nature and end of Religion being our conformity to the will of God, which the Apoſtle expounds to be our *Sanctification*, and that cannot be, till we receive this Holy *Leaven* in our ſelves, by which the *whole lump* of Man comes to be levened: Man, in *Body*, *Soul* and *Spirit*; Man, *throughout*; Man to be a *New Man*; for ſo the Apoſtolical Doctrine inſtructs us: That as we have long born the *Image of the Earthly*, ſo we

may come to *bear the Image of the Heavenly Man, the Lord from Heaven*: And, like him, to be *heavenly minded.* And truly That is the *Man* I would chooſe to aſſociate my ſelf with, and That the Church, Society, or People whoſe communion I would prefer, that are Followers and Children of this Light of Jeſus, who, deſtitute of Pompous Worſhips, and of tedious and difficult Creeds, reſolve all into an humble and daily Watch & Obedience to this Light of *Chriſt* in the Conſcience, both as to their worſhip to God and converſation among men, whatever the unjuſt unthinking World is pleaſed to judge of Them. I ſhall detain the *Reader* no longer from the Book it ſelf. He will find *Vertue* and *Charity* the great tendency of it. And tho' it may be objected by ſome, That much of the Service of it is over, becauſe the *current of Perſecution is ſtopt*;

They

They are under a great miſtake: The Service of it is not over; would it were: For Debauchery, of all ſorts, was never more Impudent and Epidemical; & as great *Uncharitableneſs* ſtill appears among People. Their Hands are in ſome meaſure ſtopt or diverted, but their Tongues are not, for they were never more on Fire againſt one another; and we know out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaks. They do not only *whiſper*, but *Rail* & *Threaten* one aonther; and to be ſure, *Religion* muſt be much of the *Enſign* of their Animoſity: Therefore till *Vice* be ſuppreſt, & Education be better provided for, and *Preſumption* and *Violence* Extinguiſhed, that ſo *Virtue*, *Humility* and *Charity* may prevail among us, this *Treatiſe* will be ſerviceable: However, we are not to meaſure our Duty by Succeſs: But if it ſhall pleaſe Almighty God to favour the honeſt Purpoſe of

the *Author* with his Bleſſing, that it may have thoſe deſirable effects where it comes, the *Author* will exceedingly rejoyce, and God ſhall have the Glory of this, as of all other the Services of his People, who is Worthy forever.

THE

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READER,

GReat Books ſeldom find *Readers*, and it may be the Times may render this ſuch: For the motion of Affairs is ſo ſwift, that Action treads hard upon the Heels of Writing, and there is little time left to read: Beſides, People had rather converſe with the Living than the Dead, and ſuch all Books are to men in buſineſs. This Reflection at firſt danted me, the Tract being grown thus under my Hand; but believing what I have writ to be both true and uſeful to our *yet ſo much needed Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Reformation*, and taking encouragement by the kind reception of ſome former *Eſſayes* and *Adreſſes* I made, I reſolved to let it go, but with this care, that by prefixing Contents paged, thou mayſt readily turn to that part which may more immediately concern thee, or beſt ſuit and anſwer thy Inquiry.

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God's

God's love to mankind, Christ's Doctrine and Example, and the Principles of Protestants. *A Book of Bishop* Taylor, *and a discourse of* J. Tillotson *recommended: That all Animosities be laid aside, the present providence reverenced and pursued. The best way of doing it, by a* Protestant *Union and keeping a just Ballance in the civil Government; a tolleration of tender and peaceable Conscience, and punishment of all Impiety,* from p. 229, to p. 231.

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AN

AN ADDRESS TO Protestants UPON THE Present Conjuncture.

Section 1. *The Preamble.*

My Friends and Country-men;

IF you believe, that there is a God, & that he is *Holy*, *Just* and *Good*; that he *Made* us, that we *Owe* our selves to him, and that he is not *Careless* of us, but the *Constant Observer* of our *Thoughts* and *Actions*; and that as he is the *Rewarder* of them that *fear*, *love* and *obey* him, so he is the *severe Punisher* of all such as transgress his Law, and break his Righteous Commandments: If (I say) you believe these things, and not only, that there is a *Final Day* of *Reckoning*, but that God, even in this World, recompenses his *Judgments* upon the Wicked. and visits *Nations* with his hot Displeasure because of their *Impiety* (which hath been the sensible Experience and free Confession of all Ages) *then* it belongs to us of these *Kingdoms* to reflect

upon our ſelves, and take a true *View* of our Actions, ſince *Divine Vengeance, for ought we ſee, is ſtill at the Door.* And for the Lord's ſake, let us have a Care in the doing of it, ſince *God will not be mocked*; and that our *Miſcarriage* in ſuch an Inquiry will be, as only our own Infelicity, ſo of infinite Moment to us. I muſt needs be Plain and Earneſt here; For if we miſcarry in the *Search*, we ſhall certainly miſcarry in the *Cure*. *Sin* gives the *deadlieſt* of all Wounds to Mankind; but with grief I ſay it, for 'tis too true, there is no Wound ſo ſlightily healed. We rather ſeek our *Eaſe*, than our *Security*; like thoſe Fools that love the *pleaſanteſt*, not the *ſafeſt Potions*. It is ill at all times to flatter a Man's *Self*; but it is moſt Dangerous about *Repentance*. Something men would *keep*, ſomething men would *hide*; and yet they have to do with that *Searcher* of *Hearts*, from whom it is impoſſible they ſhould hide any thing. This *Folly* increaſes our Account, endangers our *Cure* and makes our Condition Deſperate, if not *Irrecoverable*.

Gal. 6. 5, 6, 7.

Jer. 17. 10.

O *England*, my Native Country, *Come to Judgments! bring thy deeds to the true Light*; ſee whether they are *wrought in God or no*. Put not off thy ſelf with *Hay*, *Straw* and *Stubble*; for they will burn, and the *Fire is at the Door*, that will conſume them. He is coming, whoſe Reward is with him, and will give every one according to his Works. Let us therefore *Examine* our ſelves, *Try* our ſelves, *Prove* our own ſelves, whether Chriſt be in us or not; if his *Spirit*, his *Nature*, his *Meekneſs*, his *Patience*, his great *Self-denyal* dwell in us; if not, we are yet Reprobates; yet under the *Reproofs* of the Almighty;

Joh. 3. 21.

Rev. 22. 12.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

Almighty; the Charge and *Guilt* of *Sin*; and his *Witneſs* in our own Conſciences ſends up Evidence to Heaven againſt us every day: This I juſtly fear and take to be our Caſe. Let us therefore ſtrictly look into our Converſations, and with an impartial Eye take a juſt view of thoſe Sins, that moſt ſeverely cry to the *Great Judge* againſt us. And they appear to me to be of *Two Sorts*; the one relating more particularly to the *State*, the other to the *Church* (if I may without Offence uſe that *Diſtinction*) for my Witneſs is with God, I intend not Provocation to any, but the *Edification* of all.

Thoſe *Impieties*, that relate more particularly to the *State* to correct, are DRUNKENNESS; WHOREDOMS and FORNICATION; LUXURY or EXCESS, in APPAREL, in FURNITURE and in LIVING; PROFUSE GAMING; and finally, OATHS, BLASHEMY and PROPHANENESS: Theſe Swarm in our Streets, theſe Scandal our Profeſſion, and cry aloud to Heaven, and provoke Divine Wrath againſt us.

Sect 2. *Of the Sin of Drunkenneſs.*

DRUNKENNESS, or Exceſs in Drinking, is not only a *Violation* of *God's Law*, but of our own *Natures*: It doth, of all other Sins, rob us of our *Reaſon*, deface the Impreſſions of *Vertue*, and extinguiſh the Remembrance of God's Mercies and our own Duty: It fits men for that, which they would abhor, if *ſober*. The *Inceſt*, *Murder*, *Robberies*, *Fires* and other *Villanies*, that have been done in *Drunken Fits*,

make *Drunkenneſs* a Common Enemy to Humane Society. It renders men unfit for *Truſt* or *Buſineſs*; It tells *Secrets*, betrays *Friendſhip*, diſpoſes men to be *Trapanned* and *Cheated*: Finally, it ſpoils *Health*, weakens *Humane Race*, and above all *provokes the Juſt God to Anger*, who cried thus of Old againſt thoſe that were guilty of it; *Wo to the* Drunkards *of* Ephraim! *the* Drunkards *of* Ephraim *ſhall be trodden under feet: they have* **Erred through Wine**, *and through* Strong Drink *are out of the Way*; *the* **Prieſt** *and the* **Prophet** *have erred through* Strong Drink, *they err in* Viſion, *they ſtumble in* Judgment. Again, *Wo unto them that are* **Mighty** *to drink Wine, and men of ſtrength to mingle* ſtrong drink. *Wo unto them that riſe up* early *in the Morning, that they may follow* ſtrong drink; *that continue until Night, till Wine inflame them: and the* Harp, *and the* Viol, *the* Tabret *and the* Pipe, *and* Wine *are in their Feaſts*; *but they* regard not the Work of the Lord, *neither conſider the Operations of his hands. Therefore* Hell *hath enlarged her ſelf, and opened her Mouth without meaſure, and their* Glory *and their* Multitude, *and their* Pomp, *and* he that rejoyces, *ſhall deſcend into it.*

Iſa. 28. 1, 2, 3. Amos 6. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Yet you will bear me witneſs, I do not wrong the preſent *Humor* of too many in this *Nation*, and thoſe not of the loweſt Quality, in ſaying, that it is too often the *beginning* and *top* of their *Friendſhip*: It is their Common Diverſion and Entertainment. I might ſafely ſay, the *Poor* of *England* could be maintain'd by their Exceſs. Oh! hath the God of Heaven given men *Plenty* for ſuch Ends? or will this kind of Improvement of their Worldly *Talent* give them Peace in the Day of Judgment? But that people

people ſhould do this without *ſhame*, nay, *glory* in it too, is greatly to be lamented; for 'tis not only Palate or Appetite, but an unnatural Vanity of Conqueſt excites not a few; as if it were matter of *Triumph* to Drown a Man's *Reaſon*, and to Degrade him to the *Beaſt*.

Let us hear, upon the whole matter, the Sentence pronounced againſt them by the Wiſe Man. *Who hath* Wo? *who hath* Sorrow? *who hath* Contentions? *who hath* Babling? *who hath* Wounds *without Cauſe*? *who hath* Redneſs *of Eyes*? *They that tarry* long *at the* WINE, *they that go to ſeek* mixt WINE. *Look not thou upon the* WINE, *when it is* Red, *when it giveth his* Colour *in the Cup, when it* moveth it ſelf aright; *at the laſt it* biteth *like a Serpent, and* ſtingeth *like an Adder. Thine Eyes ſhall behold* ſtrange *Women, and thine Heart ſhall utter* perverſe *things*. Prov. 23. ver. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

Here is much of the Miſchief of *Drunkenneſs* in a little, and of the Exceſs and Wantonneſs of the *Drunkard*. But alas! did ever any Age come near ours, when the very Taſting of the ſeveral ſorts of *Wine* (that are liberally drunk of at many Tables) is enough to diſtemper a Temperate Head? But that ſuch Exceſſes ſhould be endured by *Chriſtian* Governments, while the Backs of the *Poor* are almoſt *Naked*, and their Bellies miſerably pinch'd with *Hunger*, is almoſt as great a ſhame to our pretences to *Policy*, as thoſe (I fear) we Unwarrantably make to *Religion*. Oh! that we were fit to receive that Heavenly Exhortation of the Apoſtle, *Be not* Drunk *with* Wine, *wherein is Exceſs*; *but be* filled with the Spirit (which God knows is mockt at! He goes on) *ſpeaking to your ſelves* (not in *Lampoons* nor *Obſcene Songs*, that excite Luſt, but) *in* Pſalms, *and* Hymns *and* ſpiri-

tual *Songs, ſinging and making Melody in your* Heart *to the Lord, giving Thanks* always *for* all things *unto God and the Father, in the* Name *of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Sect. 3. *Of the Sin of Whoredom and Fornication.*

THE *Next* crying Sin is that of WHOREDOM and FORNICATION. From one of the Cleaneſt People under Heaven, I fear, *we are become* one of the *moſt Unchaſte*, at leaſt in and about *London*. The *French* have ſufficiently revenged themſelves upon us by the *looſe Manners* they have brought amongſt us, of which this makes a great part. But I muſt needs ſay, to their Credit, but our Reproach, they keep their Wits in their *Debaucheries*, whilſt we, by *Over-doing* them, in the Imitation of them, loſe both. What is become of the Antient *Education* of the Kingdom? Our *Integrity*, *Gravity* and *Manhood*, which gave our Men ſo great Reputation in the World; is it not turn'd into *Swearing* and *Drinking*, *Fidling* and *Dancing*, *fine Cloaths*, a *Duel* and a *Wench*? Their *Prophaneneſs* muſt paſs for Wit, and their *baſe Crafts* be called *Policy*.

But where is that *Retired Breeding*, which made our *Women* as famous for their *Virtue*, as they were always held for their *Beauty*? Alas! there hath been a ſort of Induſtry uſed to ſubdue their *Native Modeſty*, as if it were *ill breeding* to have it; and *Arts* practiſed to make them *Hardy* againſt their own *Bluſhes*, and maſter their ſhy and baſhful Diſpoſition (ſo peculiar to Chaſtity) into an Unconcerned *Confidence*: as if it were their Perfection to be *Inſenſible* of

of ill, and to be *Tame* at all things a Virtue. Strange! that *Sobriety* ſhould be turn'd into *Levity!* and *Luſt* called *Love!* and Wantonneſs, *good Humor!* To introduce which, nothing hath been ſo Pernitious, as the Uſe of *Plays* and *Romances* amongſt us, where the warm and uneven *Paſſions* of our *Youth*, eaſily tranſported beyond the Government of their *Reaſon*, have been mov'd and excited to try that in Earneſt, which they have heard or ſeen in Jeſt.

But which way ſoever this Ungodly *Latitude* came in, certain it is, that what *forty years* ago was not fit to be named in Converſation, is now practiſed without any Scruple. *Marriage*, which is *Gods Ordinance*, and as lovely to *Chaſte Minds* as lawful, is now grown a *dull Thing*, *Old* and *Clowniſh*, kept up only for *Iſſue*, and that becauſe the *Law* will have it ſo; a ſort of Formality not yet thought fit to be abrogated: So that what was once ordained of God for many other *Helps* and *Comforts*, and permitted by the Holy Apoſtle to prevent Luſt *(Better Marry than Burn)* is by the *Extravagant Growth* of *Vice* turn'd to quite the Contrary. For ſome Men and (which is worſe) ſome Women too, have ſaid, *They could love their Wives and Husbands, if they were not their Wives and Husbands*; tho that be the true Reaſon, why they ought to love them. It is in ſhort to ſay, If they were in that Condition, in which they ought not to love them, they could love them; but being in that Condition, in which they ought to love them, they declare, they cannot love them: Yet, Alas! they muſt be *Chriſtians*, and Children of God: What a ſhame is this, and what Scandal to Society? But for God's ſake, let this Impiety be laid to Heart! let not the *Marriage Bed* be ſo horribly *defiled*, let not our *Vir-*

gins be ſo baſely *abuſed:* It deſtroys *Honour*, *Fortitude*, *Health:* It pollutes *Houſes*, and makes the Iſſue of the *Nation* Spurious. It occaſions great Unkindneſſes, Rents, Confuſions and Diviſions in *Families*, between *Husband* and *Wife*, *Parents* and *Children*, *Maſters*, *Miſtriſſes* and *Servants:* It ſpots their Name: But above all, the poor *Children* are unhappy, that wear an *Ignominy* they never deſerved. In *fine*, it teaches *Young-men* to ſlight *Marriage*, and *Married Men* to break their *Contracts*. If *Religion* were not intereſted in it, yet the very *Breed* of the *Nation* is Viſibly injur'd by it: Good Horſe-Men are more Nice and Careful in their *Studs*: The Policy of theſe Kingdoms is concern'd in preventing the Miſchiefs, that follow ſuch *Licentious Practices.*

But if we will conſider the ſhare that *Religion* has, both in *Virginity* and in *Marriage*, we ſhall find many *ſevere Sentences* paſt upon the Violators of them. *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery*, ſaith God. *The* Adulterer *ſhall be put to Death*, ſaith the ſame God: *I will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt the Adulterer*, ſaith the Lord. *Know ye not, that the Unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God? be not deceived; neither* Fornicators, *nor Idolaters, nor* Adulterers, *nor Effeminate perſons, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind.* And the Holy Apoſtle gives the Reaſon, *The Body is not for* Fornication, *but for the Lord, and the Lord for the Body: Know ye not* (ſaith he) *that your Bodies are the Members of Chriſt? ſhall I then take the Members of Chriſt, and make them the Members of an* Harlot? *God forbid! Flee* Fornication: *he that committeth* Fornication, *ſinneth againſt his own Body. What!* (ſaith he) *know ye not, your Body is the Temple of the*

Exod. 20. v. 4.
Lev. 20. 10.
Mal. 3. 5. 1.
Cor. 6. 9, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20.
ch. 3. 17.

the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorifie God in your Body *and in your* Spirit, *which are God's. If any Man defile the Temple of God, him ſhall God deſtroy.* O can men profeſs to believe theſe things, and lead that wretched Life they live! But yet again hear this Man of God: *But* Fornication *and all Uncleanneſs or Covetouſneſs let it not be once named amongſt you, as becometh Saints; neither* Filthineſs, *nor fooliſh Talking nor Jeſting, which are not Convenient; but rather giving of Thanks. For this ye know, that no* Whoremonger, *nor* Unclean perſon, *nor* Covetous *man, who is an* Idolater, *hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Chriſt and God. Let no man deceive you with vain Words; for becauſe of theſe things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience: Be not ye therefore partakers with them, and have no fellowſhip with the Unfruitful Works of Darkneſs; but rather reprove them: See then, that ye walk Circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe, redeeming the Time, becauſe the Days are Evil. (Epheſ. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 16.)* I ſhall Conclude with theſe two Paſſages; the firſt is this, *Marriage is Honourable in all, and the Bed Undefiled; but* Whoremongers *and* Adulterers *God will judge!* Heb. 13. 4. This is the other, *But the Fearful and Unbelieving, and the Abominable and Murtherers, and* Whoremongers, *and Sorcerers, and Idolaters, and all Lyars ſhall have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the Second Death.* Rev. 21. 8. This alone ought to deter all People, who have any reſpect for Holy Scripture, and do believe the Mind of God to be declared therein. Let then both *Cities Courts, Towns* and *Houſes* be ſwept of ſuch Iniquity; let the Law have its courſe upon thoſe immoral

Tranſ-

Transgressors; let not God be provoked to destroy us, and let all such turn to God by unfeigned Repentance; that *Sobriety*, *Chastity* and *Vertuous Conversation* may return again among us: So shall we escape the Wrath, that for this, with other Enormities is ready to break out yet further against us.

Sect. 4. *Of the Sin of Luxury, or Excess in Living.*

THe *Third* Crying Sin of this Land is *Great* **Luxury** and **Voluptuousness**, and that in several respects; In *Apparel*, in *Furniture*, in *Feasting*: In these things there is great Excess. An *Excess* is the Immoderate use of any thing. That which is lawful in it self, may be *Abused* in the Use of it. What is more Allowable, yet what is more Abused than *Cloths* and *Victuals?* The End of *Apparel* is to cover Nakedness, keep People Warm, Distinguish Sexes; but the End is perverted. It is now used more for *Ornament*, for *Pride*, for *Lust*; to beget *Esteem* and to draw *Respect* to the Person that wears it, than any real benefit: A Mean, an Effeminate, a Wretched way to *Honour*, yet such is the *Folly* of the *Age*, that few things are more Reverenced. It opens Doors, gets Access, obtains Dispatches, carries away the *Cap* and the *Knee* from most other Pretences. The Truth is, this *Vanity* abuses the Reason of *Just Respect*; for True Quality, if plain, is not to be known among *Fine Clothes*. But it does not only Confound all *Reasonable Distinction*, and those *Civil Degrees* that are among People; but it begets *Pride*:

They

They think themſelves *ſome Body*, if they are *Fine*; Plain Cloths muſt give them the *Way* and the *Wall*, and keep due *Diſtance* too. It introduces *Effeminacy*, and excites to Wantonneſs: it provokes to *Prodigality*, and leads People to Idleneſs. But there is a ſort of *Madneſs* in it too; for 'tis not ſo much the Apparel, as the *Trimming*; not the Cloths, but the *Cut*, the *Mode*, the *Figure*, that prevails: And as often as this changes, Clothes grow *Uſeleſs*, that are not half worn out. This is an Iniquity againſt the Good of the *Government*, as well as againſt God and his Creatures; and there is ſo ſtrong a Temptation in it, that not a Few turn Naught to be *Fine*, as well as that the Fine turn *Naught*. In ſhort, there is no Good, no Advantage, Prudence or Conveniency in this *Exceſs*: The *Law* of *God* and of the *Land* rebuke it: The third Chapter of *Iſaiah* is almoſt intirely employed againſt it, in which God does not only rebuke the *Haughty Looks*, the *Wanton Eyes* and *Enticing Mean* and *Behaviour* of the Women of thoſe Times; but declares his Reſolution too, "That he would take away the Bravery of their *Ornaments*, *Chains*, *Bracelets*, *Rings*, *Jewels* and *Changeable* Suits of Apparel, and that their *Perfume* ſhould "be turned into a *Stink*, and inſtead of a *Girdle* there "ſhould be a *Rent*, and inſtead of Well-ſet Hair *Baldneſs*, and inſtead of a Stomacher a *Girding of Sackcloth*, and *Burning* inſtead of Beauty. Thy Men "*(ſaid God)* ſhall fall by the *Sword*, and thy *Mighty* in "the *War*: and her *Gates* ſhall lament and mourn; ſhe "being deſolate, ſhall ſit upon the Ground. Iſa. 3.

This was alſo the Sin of *Tyrus*, as we may ſee *Ezek.* 27. For *Pomp* and *Pride* ſhe excelled in thoſe days: She *boaſted in her Splendor and ſumptuous Living*; Her Buildings

Buildings were *Lofty*, her Furniture *Stately*, her Apparel *Coſtly*, but her *End was Terrible, and her Deſtruction very Great.* And God expreſly threatens by his Prophet *Zephaniah*; *I will puniſh the Princes and the Kings Children, and all that are clothed with* ſtrange Apparel. What is this *ſtrange Apparel*? Is it *New Faſhions*? then we are guilty with a witneſs. Or is it the Faſhions of *ſtrange Countries*? it is ſtill our own Caſe. We have been more Careful to receive the Law from *France* for our Clothes, than from Chriſt for our Converſation; and ſo Prevalent is the *Humor* of that Country with us, and Powerful the *Aſcendant* it hath over us, that we ſeem to be *French-Men*, living in *England*. But in this, as alſo in all other things, the *Chriſtian Religion excells*, and that for the Good of *Civil Society*: It reproves this *Exceſs*, limits the Vain Mind of Man, and teaches that *decent Plainneſs*, which becomes the Providence and Gravity of *Civil Government*.

Hear the Language of the holy Apoſtles, in whoſe Doctrine we all pretend to believe: *I will therefore* (ſaith *Paul*) *that Women adorn themſelves in* Modeſt Apparel, *with Shamefacedneſs and Sobriety*, not with Broidered Hair, *or* Gold, *or* Pearls, *or* Coſtly Arry; *but (which becometh Women profeſſing Godlineſs) with Good Works.* The ſame Doctrine is repeated by the Apoſtle *Peter*, who ſpeaking to the *Chriſtian Women*, to whom he wrote; *Let not your Adorning be in that Outward Adorning of* Plating the Hair, *and of* wearing of Gold, *or of putting on of Apparel*; *but let it be the* hidden Man of the Heart *in that which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of a* Meek *and* Quiet *Spirit, which is in the ſight of God of great Price*: For after this manner

1 Tim. 2. 9, 10.

1 Pet. 3. 3, 4, 5.

ner in the *Old Time* the *holy Women alſo, who truſted in God*, adorned *themſelves*. Would to God I could ſay for the Women of our Age, that they truſted in God too, and adorned themſelves with no other Ornaments, than what agreed with the *Modeſt* and *Humble Plainneſs* of thoſe Chriſtian Times!

But the *Law* of the *Land* as well as the *Chriſtian Law* reproves this Exceſs. They only want to be refreſht and inforced by the Care of our *Superiors*: Were they *Strictly* put in *Execution*, it would not only *prevent* much Miſchief, and *encreaſe* the Wealth of the Kingdom, but make Private Men in a little time thank the *Juſt* and Seaſonable *Severity* of the *Government*. For it would help to keep them within *Compaſs*, to preſerve (which is one way to *encreaſe*) their *Eſtate*; to enlarge their *Trade*, provide better for their Children, and open their hands more *Liberally* to the *Poor*: And this I am ſure, God requires at our Hands.

What I have ſaid againſt *Exceſs* in *Apparel*, is alſo applicable to *Exceſs* in *Furniture*: For as *Finery* is more valued than *Clothes*, ſo is the *Furniture*, than the *Houſe*. It is a moſt *Inexcuſable Superfluity*, to beſtow an *Eſtate* to line *Walls*, dreſs *Cabinets*, embroider *Beds*; with an Hundred other *unprofitable Pieces* of *State*, ſuch as Maſſy *Plate*, Rich *Chiny*, Coſtly *Pictures Sculpture*, *Fret-work*, *Inlayings*, and Painted *Windows*, of no uſe in the Earth, only for *Show* and *Sight*: The *Intereſt* of which Money, ſo ill employed, might probably *Maintain* the *Poor* of the Nation. "O Lord "God! haſt thou given us *Plenty*, and ſhould we ſee "others Want? Should we clothe our *Dead Walls*, "and let thy Poor go Naked? Can we feed our "Eyes with theſe *Objects*, and not feed the *Hungry*

"with

"with Bread, and ſpend our Money upon *Lifeleſs* "*Pictures*; but ſhut up our Bowels to thy Living "*Image*, the *Poor* and *Needy* of the Earth? Rebuke "this Evil Mind, and *bring down the Pride of all Fleſh*, "O Lord! for thy Name's ſake.

The *Laſt* Exceſs is that of **Feaſting** and **Voluptuouſneſs**, Immoderate Eating and Drinking, with that ſtrain of *Mirth* and *Jollity*, which is the *Mode* and Practice of the Times. *Dives* is almoſt got into every Family, eſpecially of thoſe of Note and Eſtate; and it is *Want* of *Wealth*, and not of Will, that the Greateſt Part of the Nation is not guity: They moſtly ſin to their Ability, and that is ſad. But the Sin of *Voluptuouſneſs* is ſwell'd to that Bulk, that there are more *Receipts* for Eating and Drinking, than there are *Precepts* of *Life* in the Old and New Law. The Book of Cookery has out-grown the *Bible*, and I fear is *read* oftener, to be ſure, it is *more in Uſe*. In this Art the *Luſt* of the *Fleſh* is deeply concern'd; there is not ſo much Care of the Stomach as of the *Palate*, of Health as *Pleaſure*: It is the *Taſte*, the *Guſt*, the *Reliſh*, that makes the Victuals go down; therefore the *Sawce is preferred before the Meat*. *Twelve penny* worth of Fleſh with *Five Shillings* of Cookery may happen to make a *Faſhionable Diſh*; plain *Beef*, *Mutton*, or any other thing is become *Dull Food*: But by that time its *Natural Reliſh* is loſt in the Crowd of the Cook's *Ingredients*, and the Meat ſufficiently diſguiſed to the Eaters; it paſſes under a *Fench Name* for a *Rare Diſh*. But there is one thing in this Impiety more than ordinarily *Condemnable*; it deſtroys *Hoſpitality*, and wrongs the *Poor*: For that Expence, which is now flung away upon a *Vicious Palate*, upon a *French Soup*

or

or *Sauce*, in former Times afforded several Dishes of *substantial Victuals*; which did not only feed Strangers or Neighbours, but the *Poor*, who have now little more than (what the *Dogs* had then) *Empty Dishes* to lick. This is Abusing the Providence of God, Tyrannizing over the Creatures made for man's Use, and sacrificing their *Poor Lives*, not to our *Lives*, but to our *Lust*. 'Tis against such as these the *Creation groans*, and from whose *Intemperance* it cries to be delivered, *Rom.* 8. 21, 22.

God in all Ages had a Controversie with *Voluptuous Men*, and the Testimonies of *sacred Records* are Strong and Numerous against them: I will mention a few of them. *Voluptuousness* was the Sin of the *Old World*: They were *Eating and Drinking, Marrying, and giving in Marriage, pleasing the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life*, until the *Day* of the *Flood*. This also was the Condition of *Sodom*; Christ himself has expreſt it in these words: *In the Days of* Lot *they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; the same Day, that* Lot *went out of* Sodom, *it rained Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* has it in these words, speaking to *Jerusalem*; *Behold, this was the Iniquity of thy Sister* Sodom, Pride, Fulness *of* Bread *and Abundance of* Idleness *was in her and her Daughters: neither did she strengthen the Hand of the* Poor *and* Needy, *and they were Haughty, and committed Abomination before me; therefore I took them away, as I saw good.* And it is very Remarkable, that the *Voluptuousness* of the *Israelites* was joyned with their *Idolatry*. It is said, that

Gen. 6. Mat. 24. 37, 38, 39.

Gen. 19. Luke 22. 28, 29.

Ezek. 16. 49, 50.

when

when *Moſes* was in the Mount, the People, Impatient of his Stay, *ſat down to Eat and to Drink, and roſe up to Play*: They had got a *Calf* of *Gold*, and were *Dancing about it*: But it was a *Diſmal Ball*, and they paid dear for their *Junket*, for ſeveral *Thouſands* were *Slain*; and it is ſaid, That *God Plagued the People*. *Job*'s Children had as Ill Succeſs in their *Feſtivities*, as went *from Houſe to Houſe Feaſting and Drinking*; *and a Tempeſt roſe, and ſmote the Four Corners of the Houſe, and it fell and Kill'd them*. But moſt expreſs is that Complaint of God by the Mouth of the Prophet *Amos* againſt the *Voluptuous Jews*: *Ye that put ſo far away the* Evil Day, *and cauſe the* Seat of Violence to come near; *that lie upon Beds of* Ivory, *and ſtreteh themſelves upon their Couches, and eat the* Lambs *out of the Flock, and* Calves *out of the midſt of the Stall. That* Chaunt *at the Sound of the Viol, and invent to themſelves Inſtruments of Muſick like* David: *That drink* Bowls *of Wine, and anoint themſelves with the* chief Ointments; but they are not grieved for the Affliction of Joſeph. *Therefore now ſhall they go Captive with the Firſt that go Captive, and the* Banquet *of them that ſtretched themſelves ſhall be removed. And I will turn your* Feaſts *into Mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentation; and I will make the End thereof a* bitter *Day*.

Exod. 32. 28.

Job 1. 19.

Amos 6. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. and ch. 8. 10.

I ſhall Sum up theſe Exceſſes, and *Conclude* the Inſtances with the Story of *Dives*, more commonly known, then reverently believed, at leaſt conſidered: It is delivered to us by the Great Lord of Truth in theſe Words. "There was a Certain "Rich Man, which was cloathed in *Purple* and *Fine* "*Linnen*, and fared *Sumptuouſly* every Day. And "there

"there was a certain Beggar, named "*Lazarus*, which was laid at his Gate "full of Sores, and desiring to be fed "with the *Crums*, which fell from the Rich Man's "Table: Moreover the Dogs came, and licked his "Sores. And it came to pass, that the Beggar died, "and was carried by the Angels into *Abraham*'s "Bosom. The Rich Man also died and was bu- "ried: And in Hell he lift up his Eyes, being in "Torments, and seeth *Abraham* afar off and *Laza-* "*rus* in his Bosom. And he cried and said, Father "*Abraham*, have mercy on me, and send *Lazarus*, "that he may dip the tip of his Finger in Water, "and *cool* my Tongue, for I am *Tormented* in this "Flame. But *Abraham* said, Son, remember that "thou in thy Life-time receivedst thy Good things, "and likewise *Lazarus* Evil things; but now he is "comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides "all this, between us and you there is a Great Gulf "fixed, so that they which would pass from hence "you, cannot, neither can they pass to us, that "would come from thence. Luk. 16. 19. — 26.

This Great Passage comprehends the *State* of *Men* in both Worlds: It shews to us, what that Life is in this World, which leads to *Misery* in the Next, and what to *Happiness*. No *Sensual Man*, no *Voluptuous Person*, not those that deck themselves with *Delicate Apparel*, and fare *Sumptuously* every Day, that love their *Back* and their *Belly* more then God and the *Poor*, shall be received into *Abraham's Bosom*, or dwell in *Blessedness* forever. Let none deceive themselves, the Jealous *God will not be mocked*, *If ye Sow to the Flesh, ye shall reap Corruption*; *but if ye sow to the Spirit, ye shall reap Life* Gal. 6. 8.

Everlasting. They that live in *Pleasures, Kill the Just*; they Crucifie the Just Witness in themselves: Such Treasure up *Wrath* against the *Day* of *Wrath. Wo, Anguish and Tribulation to every Soul that doth Evil, whether* Jew *or* Gentile, *Professor or Prophane, Christian or Infidel:* For the *Dives*'s under all these Names must be turned into Hell: But such as through *Patience* and *Well-doing* wait for Immortality, as poor *Lazarus* did, after all their *Poverty, Neglect* and *Hunger*, shall receive *Glory*, *Honour* and *Eternal Life.* And truly, it is some Comfort to the *Miserable* in this World, that they shall not live always in it, and that they have to do with a God, who is no *Respecter* of *Persons.* This Judge is impartial; the *Poor* are upon Even Terms with the *Rich*; and it will not be *Quality*, but *Integrity*; not *Riches*, but *Righteousness* which will recommend us to him. No wonder then if the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in the Name of God, charged the ancient *Jews Not to go into the House of Feasting*; and that *Ecclesiastes* hath said, *That it is better to go to the House of Mourning, than to the House of Feasting*, since so many Evils follow it. But there is one *Feast* that even Christ himself allows us; though I have little Reason to believe it will be Imitated, when I consider the *Natural Aversness* that is, even among Professt *Christians*, to his *Self-denying Precepts* and *Example.*

James 5. 5, 6.

Rom. 2. 8, 9. 13, 13, 14.

Rom. 2. 7.

Eccles. 7. 2.

Then said Jesus, *When thou makest a* Dinner *or a* Supper, *call not thy Friends or thy Brethren, neither thy Kinsmen nor thy Rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee* (This would beget *Feasting*, the thing

Luk. 14. 12, 13, 14.

thing to be avoided, no ſuch matter.) *But when thou makeſt a* Feaſt, *call the* Poor, *the* Maimed, *the* Lame, *the* Blind, *and thou ſhalt be* Bleſſed, *for they* cannot recompence thee; *but thou ſhalt be recompenced at the* Reſurrection *of the Juſt.* There are few, that ſtrive to obey this Counſel; there is ſo little of *Faſhion* or of *Intereſt* in it. What! Perſons of *Quality* feaſt the *Poor*, Carve for the *Maimed*, and feed the *Blind*? 'Tis too *Mean*, too *Ignominous*. If they have the *Bones*, the *Scraps*, the *Crums*, 'tis well. No, no, this Doctrine is too like him, that taught it, to be practiſed by them that are ſo *Unlike* him. They that follow him in theſe things, muſt *Take up the Croſs*, *Deſpiſe the Shame*, *and Sow in Hope*: But becauſe there is an *Everlaſting Recompence* for thoſe that do; I fervently deſire of God, that it would pleaſe him to put it into the Minds of both Magiſtrates and People to *Love Mercy*, *Do Juſtice*, *Walk humbly with the Lord*, and *Meekly* and *Charitably* towards all men. Mic. 6. 5, 6. 7, 8. Col. 3. 14. I beſeech you in the *Tender Bowels* of a Chriſtian Man to conſider of the *Preſent Conjuncture*: Is this a Time for *Feaſts* and *Revels*, *Plays* and *Paſtimes*, when the very *Wrath* of *God* ſeems to hang by a *ſlender Thread* over our Heads? O! let your *Moderation* be known unto all men, now the Lord is ſo near at hand, ſo very near indeed.

And I do *humbly* pray the *Supreme Authority* of this Land, to put a ſpeedy Check to theſe Exorbitances, to Diſcountenance theſe Exceſſes, by the Revival of the good *Old Laws* of the Land, and in making of ſuch New Ones, as may be thought convenient to prevent ſuch *Pride* and Prodigality. For, I think, I may both with Modeſty and Truth af-

firm, if the very *Unneceſſary Expences* of moſt Ranks or Degrees in this Kingdom could be brought into one *Publick Purſe*, they would ariſe to *Three Times* more Money, than either is given or is requiſite to the *Maintenance* of the *Poor* that are in it: And whether this be a thing *Practicable* or no, it matters not, though I believe it is; the very *Preventing* of that Exceſs which is amongſt us, would be pleaſing to Almighty God, and one way or other *Beneficial* to the whole.

Sect. 5. *Of the Evil of Gaming.*

IT may not be improper for me here to follow this Head of Exceſs with the Sin of GAMING; an Invention of much Miſchief in the World, and therefore inconſiſtant both with *Chriſtianity* and *Civil Government*. The *Evils* that attend it are neither ſmall nor few. It is *Firſt* a Great Enemy to *Buſineſs*, and that Juſt Care, that People ought to have for the Diſcharge of their Reſpective Capacities in their *Civil Affairs*. *Next*, It is one of the Greateſt *Thieves* to Mens *Eſtates*: Many brave Families have been ruin'd by a *Gameſter*. That which hath been got by the *Care* and *Prudence* of a Father, it may be, hath been loſt in one Night by the *Extravagant Humor* of a Son: But that the Reward of *Virtue* ſhould be the *Stake* of *Folly*, and the painful Acqueſt of *Worthy Anceſtors* expoſed to the *Chance* and *Hazard* of the *Die*, is ſuch Impiety to *God's Providence*, Ingratitude to *Parents*, Injury to their own *Families* and Diſgrace to the *Government*, that,

I

I conceive, it may very well deſerve the Care of our *Superiors* to prevent that *Extravagancy* for the future, by the execution of the Laws in being againſt it. *Thirdly*, It is a great *Conſumer* of *Time*. They who are addicted to *Gaming*, are generally the moſt *Idle* and *Uſeleſs* people in any *Government*: And give me leave to ſay, that men are *Accountable* to the Government for their *Time*: There ought to be no Idleneſs in the Land; for that End *Bridewels* are provided. Of many other Sins people are Weary, but of this never, unleſs to *Sleep*, or *Eat*, or for *Want* of *Money* to Play. We are commanded to *Redeem the Time*, *becauſe the Dayes are Evil*; but theſe people chuſe rather to *Loſe their Time*, and *fall into the Evil*, they ſhould avoid. A *Gameſter* and a *Chriſtian* are as oppoſite as a *Saint* and a *Sinner*; for the *Chriſtian* looks to God in the increaſe of his *Eſtate*, but the *Gameſter* to Skill and Chance; and there is no more of God in his Mind, than there is in his *Game*: And it cannot be otherwiſe. *Fourthly*, Therefore *Gaming* deſerves to be ſuppreſt, becauſe it has been the Occaſion of *Breach of Friendſhip*, *Quarrels*, *Bloodſhed* and *Murder*: if we ought to ſhun the Occaſions of Evil, to be ſure we ought not to indulge them. Epheſ. 5. 1.

The *Laſt* Miſchief that belongs to *Gaming* (which I ſhall mention at this time) is the *Horrid* OATHS and *Paſſionate Imprecations* uſed by the generality of *Gameſters*; but becauſe they are not confin'd to *Gaming*, but run through the *whole Converſation* of men, they may very well challenge a place among thoſe *Crying Sins*, that I found my ſelf Obliged in Conſcience to Complain of to ſuch as have Power in their Hands to *puniſh* and *ſuppreſs* them.

Sect. 6. *Of the Horrid Sin of* Oaths, Curſing *and* Blaſphemies.

I Have therefore reſerved to ſpeak of OATHS, CURSES and BLASPHEMIES till *laſt*, becauſe I take them to be the moſt *Provoking Sin.* The other Enormities of *Drunkenneſs*, *Whoredom*, Exceſs, *&c.* do more immediately relate to our ſelves; and are therefore Sins againſt God, becauſe they are a Tranſgreſſion of that *Order*, which he placed in the *Nature* of things: But *Oaths* and *Blaſphemies* muſt be referred to God himſelf; they are Sins committed more immediately againſt his *Being*, his *Name*, and the Majeſty and Dignity of his *Nature.* It is Horrible to hear, how he is *called upon* about every thing, be it never ſo *Trivial*; yea, about nothing, and worſe than nothing. He is Summon'd at their *Games*, their *Sports*, their *Obſcenities*, in their *Drunkenneſs*, *Whoredoms*, *Murders*, *Rapines* and *Treachery.* There is a Generation that cannot ſpeak without him, though they can live without him. They would make him a *Voucher* of all their *Falſhood* and a *Witneſs* for their *Lyes* as often as they would be believed. But I tremble to Remember, with what *Preſumption* ſome Men, when tranſported into *Rage*, Invoke him to *Damn* thoſe they are *Angry* with; yea, themſelves too; and how Impiouſly they ſend him at their pleaſure upon the Errands of their *Vengeance.* Can there be greater *Blaſphemy*, then to dare ſo much as to think, that the *Holy*, *Wiſe* and *Juſt* God ſhould be the Executioner of their *Paſſion* and *Fury*, and the Avenger

Avenger of their *Malice* and *Corrupt Intereſts*? And It is Obſervable, that if in any thing they are Croſs'd or Diſappointed, they fall a *Swearing*, *Curſing*, *Damning*, *Blaſpheming*, as if the Name of God ſhould make them Satisfaction; or that it were a Sort of *Eaſe* to them, to deliver themſelves of a *Burden* of *Oaths*.

But that which aggravates this Evil, is the *Impudence* of the people that commit it: They are not Contented to uſe it at *Home*, and at *Ale-houſes* and *Taverns* abroad; but in the open *Streets*, *Markets* and *Fairs*; in the moſt Notorious Places of Commerce and Traffick; to the Diſhonour of *God*, the Grief and Offence of *Sober Men*, and the *Bad Example* of thoſe that are not ſo. But this *Shameful Impiety* ends not here; it has not only prevailed with the *Populace*, the *Cannale*, the *Vulgar*; but the *Men* of *Quality*, the *Gentry*, and the *Nobles* of the *Realm*, to whom God in his Providence hath been more Propitious, placing them at the Diſtance of *Example* and *Imitation* to the Multitude: Even thoſe, that ought to be the *Heads* of our *Tribes*, the *Leaders* of the people; whoſe *Virtue* ſhould at leaſt *keep Pace* with their *Quality*, are guilty of this Impious and *Baſe Cuſtom*; and too many of them more concerned in it, than the *Meaneſt* of the People. And to carry this Practice to the *Utmoſt Hight* of that Miſchief it ſeems Capable of doing, there are but too many, God knows, of thoſe in *Authority* that uſe it; even the Men, that by *Law* ſhould ſuppreſs it! And if Men of *Office* and *Power* that ought, in their ſeveral Truſts, to be a *Terror to Evil-doers*, methinks, they ſhould not ſuffer the *Name* of the *God* of the *Nation* (whom they pretend to worſhip) to be ſo *prophanely us'd* and *blaſphemed*;

and least of all, that they should be the Men themselves, who Commit the *Enormities* that they should punish. To say Truth, and with *Grief* of *Soul* I speak it, so Universal is this *Contagion* in the Kingdom, that not only the *Elder* sort and *Youth*, but the *Children* are infected: The *Boyes* of seven Years Old, that in my time did not think upon an *Oath*, are now full of their GOD-DAMN-YOU's and GOD-DAMN-ME's at their *Sports* and *Plays!* And the *Women* of our Nation, especially those of any *Rank*, who by a Reserv'd *Education* and the Modesty of their *Sex* were scarcely ever heard to *Curse*, even what they did not like, (much less to *Swear* upon Ordinary Occasions) are, some of them, grown *Hardy* enough to do *Both*. At whose Door must all these Mischiefs lie? I beseech God to put it into the Hearts of our *Superiors*, to Use their *Utmost Diligence* to rebuke and suppress this and the like *Impieties!*

We profess our selves to be *Christians*, *Followers* of that JESUS; *in whose Mouth no Guile was ever found*, what *Precept* did he ever give us? what *Example* hath he left us to Countenance this Practice? 'Tis true, he Charg'd his Disciples, *Not to Swear at all*; but we cannot think our selves to Obey him, when we *Swear* at Every thing: Pray consider the great *Difference* there is betwixt *Christ* and such *Christians*. *Christ* is Lord of a more *Perfect Law*, than that which came by *Moses*, which admits of *Oaths* in some Cases; but they were *Few*, and must be kept upon great *Penalties*: This *New Law* of JESUS takes away *Oaths* by taking away the Cause and Need of them, namely, *Falshood* and *Distrust*; and by planting *Plainness*, *Truth* and *Integrity* in the Natures of Men, which make

make them such *Faithful Disciples* to him, and so entirely *Brethren* to one another, that there seems no farther Use for *Oaths* among Men under that *Qualification*. *Ye have heard of Old Time* (saith Christ Jesus) *Thou shalt not* For-swear *thy self, but Perform thy Vows unto the Lord:* This was not *Swearing* at Pleasure, nor *Swearing* Vainly; this was thus far Good, it was the *Perfection* of the *Law*. So it was *Not to Kill, Not to Commit Adultery*; but Christ *Jesus* carries it higher: Thou must *not be Angry*; Thou must *not look upon a Woman to lust after her*; Thou must *not Swear at all*: Thou must Mat. 5. not do that, which was Allowed or Dispensed with under the *Law: For what the Law could not do through Weakness, I am come to do*; *Therefore let your* Communication, *your* **Speech**, for so the Word should be rendred, *be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay*; *Speak the Truth, by saying*, Yea, Yea; *or* Nay, Nay; Yes, Yes; *or* No, No; *for what is more, or imports more, than this*, or rises higher, or goes further than this Plainness & Simplicity, *is both Needless and Evil in a* Christian; *for it cometh of Evil.* This is the Doctrine of Jesus. Certainly then there can be no Agreement between him and the *Swearing, Damning Christians* of this Age, who are so far from *Obeying* him, whose Name they take, that they are not come to the *Righteousness* of the *Law*, that condemns all *Vain Swearing*; but lie under the *Heavy Judgment* of the Lord for the Breach of his *Third* Commandment, "Thou shalt not take "the *Name* of the *Lord* thy God in vain: Exod. 20. 7. "for the *Lord* will not hold him Guiltless, that ta- "keth his *Name* in vain. It is esteem'd a *Prophanation* of things set apart for *Divine Worship*, to imploy them in our *Common* and *Ordinary Services*; and

is

is it not *Prophanation* with a *Vengeance*, to suffer the *Name* of the Great God to be prostituted at Every Turn by *Lewd* and *Debauch'd* people? Can we be so Careful of our own *Names*, and so Careless of God's? Is it Possible, that we can be *Tenderer* of our selves, then *concern'd* for him? *for him*, I say, who *Made* us, and gives us *Life*, *Breath* and *Being*; to whom we Owe our selves, and all that we are. But that Men, to *Right* themselves, upon every *little Affront*, should Expose their Lives to *Utmost Peril*, and not find in their Heart so much as to Rebuke the *Indignities* daily put upon Heaven, is an Ill Proof of *Zeal* and *Religion*.

But as Insensible as such are of their *Duty*, God is not wanting to his own *Glory*: He has forbidden these things; let Men disobey at their *Peril*. *Ye shall not* Swear *by my Name falsly*; saith God, *neither shalt thou* Prophane *the Name of thy God, I am the* LORD. Hear O ye *Swearers*, the *Judgment* that God has denounc'd against you! *Every One that* Sweareth *shall be Cut off*, [how *Cut off*?] FROM GOD: Again, *The Land is full of Adulteries*; *and because of* SWEARING *the Land Mourneth*: *Behold! the Whirl-wind of the Lord shall heavily fall upon the Head of the Wicked.*

Jer. 23. 10, 19. Zach. 5. 3.

Sect. 7. *Of the The Sin of* Prophaneness.

TO this I shall add a *Brief Reflection* upon that Pernicious Sin of PROPHANENESS, so near a kin to *Oaths* and *Blasphemy*. Such is the *Degeneracy* of the *Age* we are fallen into, that *Prophaneness* does not

not only go Unpuniſht, but boldly lays Claim to *Wit*, and fills the Converſation of too many of thoſe that think themſelves rais'd above the *Genius* of the *Vulgar*. He is reputed *Formal*, that will not be *Rude* to *Sacred Things*; and a Man Inſipid, of no *Sence* or *Salt*, who cannot *Jeer Devotion*: And which is ſtrange, they make the Bible a ſort of *Common Place* but 'tis for *Mockery*, not for *Piety*. The *Phraſes* they uſe, are pick't to *Abuſe* that Holy Book; and that *Prophaneneſs* is placed to the Account of *Wit*. But truly, if Men muſt *Rallie Religion* at the Peril of paſſing elſe for *Fools*, and *Abuſe Scripture* to purge themſelves from the *ſuſpition* of Reverencing it, there is here an Unhappineſs in being *Conſcientious*, and on the ſide of this World the Temptation to be *Prophane* is ſtronger than the Encouragement to be *Virtuous*. For this is my Soul grieved, that Men ſhould uſe their *Wit* to Abuſe him that gave it them: And that though there is more to be ſaid for *Religion* than there can be ſaid againſt it, both with Reſpect to its Reaſonableneſs and Uſefulneſs, and that the Hazard of being *Irreligious*, is incomparably greater on the part of theſe *Atheiſtical Scoffers*, than of Men profeſſing to fear God and believe another World; They ſhould yet be ſo *Conſtant* and *Obſtinate* in their *looſe* and *lewd Converſation*! But if the *Prophaning* of the leaſt thing that was Dedicated to the Worſhip of God in the Times of the *Law*, was ſo *Hainous a Sin*, what ſhould we ſay, when men ſtick not to *Prophane* the *Name* of *God* himſelf, and ſcoff at his *Revealed Will*, ſo much Greater, than either *Temple*, or *Altar*, or thoſe *Rites* belonging unto them! God Almighty give his ſtrong Rebuke to this Extravagant Spirit.

And

And to you all, that live in the Practice of theſe open and *Crying Sins* I have at this time inſiſted upon, this I ſay unto you in the Fear of God: REPENT OF THE EVIL OF YOUR DOINGS! Bring not down the further *Judgments* of *God* upon this Land; they may be the *Affliction* of many, but in the end they will be your *Puniſhment*: Ye ſhall pay the Reckoning of their *Sufferings* in the other World, and God will charge you with the *Calamity* that they ſhall Endure! Remember, before it is too late. *Dreadful Things* are denounced againſt the Wicked; Therefore go not on to Gratifie your Hearts *Luſts* and to forget the Living God; for this ſhall be the End of ſuch Works, that God will certainly bring you to *Judgment*: And who may *Abide the Day of his Coming? and who ſhall ſtand when he appears?* No *Fleſh* can ſtand in his Preſence. Conſider that Awakening Saying of the Apoſtle, *That the Righteous ſcarcely are ſaved*; and if ſo, *Where ſhall the Ungodly, where ſhall the* Wrethecd *Sinner appear*? How ſhall ſuch be able to *hold up their Heads* in the Day of his *Wrath*, in the Hour of his *Judgment*, at that Great Time of Inquiſition, when a *Final Reckoning* ſhall be paſt, and all muſt render an *Account* of the Deeds they have done, and receive the *Reward* due unto them? Therefore, *while it is to day, harden not your Hearts* againſt God and his Law: flatter not your ſelves; to be *Chriſtians*, ye muſt be like *Chriſt*; and if ye will be Sav'd from *Wrath*, ye muſt be Redeem'd from *Sin*; for *the Wages of Sin is Death*: What we *ſow*, we muſt *reap*. Encreaſe not therefore Guilt upon your *Conſciences* by Rebelling

Eccleſ. 11. 9.

Mal. 3. 2.
1 Pet. 4. 18.

Luk. 14. 25.
Rom. 8. 11. 14.
Gal. 6. 7.

belling againſt the *Light*, that ſhines in them, *&c.* but lay your *Impieties* to Heart, mourn with true Contrition of *Soul*, and yet love *Righteouſneſs*, and hate *Iniquity*; and ye will prevent the *Civil Magiſtrate*, and probably avert the *Indignation* of God that hangs over the *Nation*. You cannot ſay you don't know your Duty, but you do not do it: The Light is come and ſhines in you, and the Grace appears daily to you, and in you, againſt the very Imaginations and Motions to Evil; and you are ſelf-condemned in your Exceſſes of all ſorts; and if your Heart Condemns you, God will not Juſtifie you: Therefore bring your Deeds to the true Light with which Chriſt has enlightned you, and examin if they are wrought in God or no; and begin a Cordial *Reformation*, which ſtands in the *Spirit of Reformation*, *John* 1. 9. and ch. 3. 21.

Sect. 8. *An Addreſs to the* Civil Magiſtrate *for Redreſs.*

HAving thus ended my *Reflections* upon the *Five great Crying Sins* of the Kingdom, and my Reproof of the *Actors* and *Promoters* of them; give me leave to make my *Humble* and *Chriſtian Addreſs* to you that are in *Authority*. And in the *Firſt* place, I beſeech you to remember, that though ye are as *Gods* on Earth, yet ye ſhall Dye like *Men*: That ye are Encompaſs'd with like *Paſſions*, and are ſubject to *Sin*. Such therefore of you, as may be concern'd in any of theſe *Enormities* (to what-ever Degree of *Guilt* it be) I beg you in the Name of God to *ſearch your ſelves*, and to be Juſt to your own *Soul's*. O! let the

the Mercies and Providences of God constrain you to *Unfeigned Repentance!* Turn to the Lord, Love Righteousness, Hate Oppression, and he will turn to you, and love you and bless you.

In the *Next* place, be pleased to consider your Commission, and examine the Extent of your *Authority:* you will find that God and the *Government* have impower'd you to punish these *Impieties*: And it is so far from being a Crime, that it is your *Duty*. This is not troubling Men for *Faith*, nor perplexing People for Tenderness of *Conscience*; for there can be no Pretence of *Conscience* to be *Drunk*, to *Whore*, to be *Voluptuous*, to *Game*, to *Swear*, *Curse*, *Blaspheme* and *Prophane*; no such Matter. These are Sins against Nature and against *Government*, as well as against the *Written Laws* of God. They lay the Ax to the Root of *Humane Society*, and are the *Common Enemies* of Mankind. 'Twas to prevent these *Enormities*, that *Government* was instituted; and shall *Government* Indulge that which it is Instituted to Correct? This were to render *Magistracy* Useless, and the Bearing of the *Sword* Vain: There would be then no such thing in *Government* as *A Terror to Evil-Doers*; but every one would do that which he thought Right in his own Eyes. God Almighty defend us from this sort of *Anarchy*.

There are *Three* Great *Reasons*, which inforce my *Supplication*. The *First* is, The *Preservation* of the *Government*, which by such *Improvidence* and *Debauchery* is like to be greatly Weakened, if not Destroyed. The *Industry*, *Wealth*, *Health* and *Authority* of the Nation are Deeply concern'd in the *Speedy* and *Exemplary Punishment* of these Extravagancies. This is the *Voice* of *Interest* for the *Common Good* of the Whole

Whole Society; *Rulers* and *Ruled*.

But there is an *Higher Voice*, unto which *Chriſtian Men* ought to have Regard, & that is the *Voice* of *God*, who requires us to *Fear him* and obey his *Righteous Commandments*, at the Peril of making him our *Enemy*, whom we ſhould make our Common Friend and *Protector*: for upon his *Goodneſs* depends our very *Natural* and *Civil Comforts*. So that it is our Intereſt *to be Good*; and It is none of the leaſt Arguments for *Religion*, that the Piety and Practice of it is the *Peace* and *Proſperity* of *Government*; and conſequently, that *Vice*, the Enemy of *Religion*, is, at the ſame time, the Enemy of *Humane Society*. What then ſhould be more concern'd for the Preſervation of *Virtue*, than *Government*; that in its *Abſtract* and True Senſe is not only founded upon *Virtue*, but without the Preſervation of *Virtue* it is impoſſible to maintain the *Beſt Conſtitution* that can be made? And however ſome particular Men may *proſper*, that are *Wicked*, and ſeveral private *Good Men Miſcarry* in the things of this World, in which ſence things may be ſaid to happen alike to all, to the *Righteous* as to the *Wicked*, yet I dare boldly affirm, and challenge any Man to the Truth thereof, that in the many Volumns of the Hiſtory of all the *Ages* and *Kingdoms* of the World there is not one Inſtance to be found, where the Hand of God was againſt a *Righteous Nation*, or where the Hand of God was not againſt an *Unrighteous Nation* firſt or laſt? Nor where a *Juſt Government* periſh't, or an *Unjuſt Government* long proſper'd? *Kingdoms* are rarely as *Short lived* as Men, yet they alſo have a *Time* to *Die*: But as *Temperance* giveth Health to Men, ſo *Virtue* gives Time to Kingdoms; and as *Vice* brings

Men

Men betimes to their *Grave*, ſo *Nations* to their *Ruin*.

'Tis the Reaſon given by God himſelf for the *Deſtruction* of the *Old World*. We have that Example before our Eyes, that a *whole World* has periſht for its Sin; its forgetfulneſs of God and their Duty to him; one Family only Excepted. That is the Reaſon which God renders for caſting out the People of thoſe Countries, that he gave into the Hands of the Children of *Iſrael*; *They were full of Uncleanneſs, Adulteries, Fornication* and other Impieties. And though he is *Soveraign Lord* of the World, and may diſpoſe of the Kingdoms therein as pleaſeth him (for *he that gives, can take away; and he that builds, can caſt down*; and Mankind is but a *Tenant* at *Will* to receive or ſurrender at his Lord's *Good Pleaſure*) yet he uſeth uot that *Prerogative* to Juſtifie his Gift of thoſe Countries to the *Jews*; but at the End of his Prohibition of *Unlawful Marriages* and *Luſts*, he charges them in theſe words; *Defile not you your ſelves in any of theſe things*: for in all theſe the Nations are defiled, which I caſt out before you; *And the Land is defiled*: therefore do I Viſit the Iniquity thereof upon it; *and the Land it ſelf* VOMITETH OUT *her Inhabitants. Ye ſhall therefore Keep my Statutes and my Judgments, and ſhall not Commit any of theſe* Abominations, *neither any of your own Nation, nor any Stranger, that ſojourneth among you; that the Land* Spue *not you* Out *alſo, when ye defile it, as it* Spued Out *the Nations that were before you.*

Gen. 6.

Levit. 18. 24, 25, 26, 28.

So Saul's *Diſobedience* was his *Deſtruction*, and his *Sin* made Way for *David*'s *Title*. Saul *died* (ſaith the Sacred Story) *for his Tranſgreſſion*: This made the

the *Philistines Conquerors*; his own *Sins* Beat him and Kill'd him. Saul *died for his Transgression*; then if he had not sinn'd, he had lived; he had beaten his Enemies and kept the Kingdom? yes, the place implies it. *Thus* then should deter all Men, but *Kings* especially, who have so much to lose *here*, and so much to answer for *hereafter*. But what was *Saul*'s *Sin?* It was, *First*, *not keeping*, *but disobeying the* Word *of the* Lord, both as it came by the *Mouth* of *Samuel*, God's Prophet, and as it spoke the Mind of God to him in his own *Conscience* (for *Moses* had said before, that the *Word* of *God* was *nigh in the Heart*, and in Gods Name commanded the Children of *Israel* to *Obey* and *Do* it.) In short, he refused the *Counsel* of *God*, and God for his *Counsellor*: For in the *Next* place he betakes himself to One that had a *Familiar Spirit* for *Advice*, saith the Story: *He enquired not of the Lord, therefore he Slew him and turned the Kingdom unto* David. There are too many people troubled with *Familiar Spirits*; it were well, if they were less *Familiar* with them: Had *Saul* trusted in God, he needed not to have been driven to that Straight. He that was made *King* by God's Appointment and endued with a *Good Spirit*, so *basely* to degenerate, as to run to a *Witch* for Counsel, could not but miscarry. To this Darkness and Extremity *Iniquity* will bring Men: And truly, a *Wo* follows all such persons; answerable to that Expression of God by the Prophet; *Wo unto them that take Counsel, and not of me.* *When* Saul (saith the place) *was* little *in his* own *Eyes*, *God honour'd him*; *he made him Head and King of the Tribes of* Israel: But when *Saul* grew *Proud*, God *deserted* him, and for his *Disobedience* de- 1 Sam. 15. 17.

 stroyed

ſtroyed him. And what befell the Family of *Saul*, in ſome *After-Ages* befell both *Kings* and *People*, and Worſe: For their Land was Invaded, *firſt* by the *Ægyptians*, and *then* by the *Caldæans* and *Babilonians*: Their *Temple* was rifled, their *Treaſures* taken, and their *Kings*, *Princes*, *Nobles*, *Artificers*, and *Mighty Men* of *Valour*, yea *all*, ſave the *Pooreſt* of the *people*, were *kill'd* or *carried away Captive* by the King of *Babilon*. The Reaſon rendred is this: Becauſe the *Kings did that which was* Evil *in the ſight of God*, *and ſtifned their Necks*, *and hardned their Hearts from turning unto the Lord God of* Iſrael; and becauſe the Chief *of the* Prieſts *and of the People tranſgreſſed very much after all the Abominations of the* Heathen. And when God ſent his Meſſengers to Reprove and Warn them, and that out of his *Great Compaſſion*, they *Wickedly* Mocked his *Meſſengers*, Deſpiſed his *Words* and Miſ-uſed his *Prophets*, till his *Wrath* came upon them, and over-threw them.

2 Kings 24. 14.

2 Chron. 36.

I will here End my Inſtances out of *Sacred Story*: and let us now *briefly* Conſider, what the *Hiſtories of other places* will tell us; that we may Obſerve ſome Proportion of *Agreement* in the *Providence* of *God* throughout the World.

The *firſt Empire* had *Nimrod's Strength*, and the *Wiſdom* of the *Caldæans* to eſtabliſh it; and whilſt their *Prudence* and *Sobriety* laſted, they proſper'd. No ſooner came *Voluptuouſneſs*, then the *Empire* decayed; and was at laſt by the *Baſe Effeminacies* of *Sardanapalus*, in whom that *Race* ended, transfer'd to another Family. It was the Policy of an *Aſſyrian* King in order to ſubdue the Strength of *Babylon*, then under good *Diſcipline*, not to Invade it with *Force*,

Force, but to DEBAUCH it. Wherefore he ſent in *Players*, *Muſicians*, *Cooks*, *Harlots*, &c. and by thoſe means introducing *Corruption* of *Manners*, there was little more to do, than to take it. *Nebuchadnezzar* by his *Virtue* and *Induſtry*, ſeen in the Siege of *Tyre*, and in many *Enterpriſes*, recover'd and enlarg'd the Empire; and it ſeems his *Diſcipline* (thoſe Times conſider'd) was ſo *Excellent*, that it was prais'd in Scripture. But when he grew *Proud* and *Fooliſh*, forgetting that *Providence*, that had ſhown it ſelf ſo kind to him, he became a *Beaſt* and graſed amongſt *Beaſts*; till God, whom he had forgotten, had reſtor'd him the *Heart* of a *Man* and his *Throne* together.

He, dying, left *Evil-Merodach* Heir to his Crown, not his Conduct, nor the Heart to conſider what God had done by him: In his Time *Pride* and *Luxury* encreaſ'd, but came not to its *full Pitch*, till the Reign of *Belſhazzar*, who did not only as *Nebuchadnezzar*, *live*, but *dye* a *Beaſt*. In him we have the Exact Example of a *Diſſolute* and *Miſerable Prince*: He thought to fence himſelf againſt Heaven and Earth; diſſolv'd in *Pleaſures* he worſhipp'd no other God. His Story may make us well Conclude, that *God and Man deſert thoſe, that deſert themſelves, and neglect the Means of their own Preſervation.* The City was taken before he knew it, and the *Sword* almoſt in his *Bowels*, before he believ'd it: His *Senſuality* had wrapt him in ſuch a *Deſperate Security*. But he fell not by the Hand of one like himſelf; for God, who had determin'd the End, prepar'd the Means. *Cyrus* and his *Perſians* were the Men: The people were *Poor*, Inhabiting a *Barren Country*; but *Hardy* and of *Sober Manners*. *Cyrus* God had endued with

Excellent Natural Qualities, cultivated (as Story tells us) by the Care of *Four* of the *Moſt Temperate*, *Juſt* and *Wiſe Perſons* of thoſe Times. This was he, whom God honour'd with the Name of his *Shepherd*, and was the Executioner of his *Vengeance* upon the *Aſſyrians*. While he reigned, all was well; but after he and his *Virtuous Companions* deceaſed, their Children fell into the *Vices* of the *Aſſyrians*; and though they Reigned from the *Indus* to the *Helliſpont*, they ſoon became the *Conqueſt* of the *Greeks*.

Never was there a greater Inſtance given of the Weakneſs of *Pomp* and *Luxury*, than in the Reſiſtance made at *Thermopoli*, where 300 *Virtuous Spartans* encounter'd the *Vaſt Army* of *Xerxes*, conſiſting of no leſs then *Seventeen Hundred Thouſand* Men. In ſhort, the Defeats of *Salamyn* and *Platea*, the Expeditions of *Xenophon* with *Cyrus* the Younger, almoſt into *Babylon*, and the Wars of *Ageſilaus* into *Aſia* made it Evident, that *Greece* wanted only *Union* and an *Head*, to make her ſelf Miſtriſs of that *Vaſt Empire*.

At laſt comes *Alexander* of *Macedon*, with the beſt Diſciplin'd People that was then known: The Diſpute was ſhort, where Steel was againſt Gold, Sobriety againſt Luxury, and *Men* againſt Men that were turn'd *Women*. Thus, the *Perſians* prepar'd by their own *Vices*, God deliver'd into the Hands of the *Greeks*, who as much excelled them in their *Virtue*, as they were ſhort of their *Dominion* and *Wealth*. But this laſted not long; for *Alexander*, who died young, ſurviv'd his *Virtue* and *Reputation* by falling into thoſe *Vices* of the *Nations* God had given him Power to *Trample* under Foot; inſomuch that he, who was before *Generous*, became *Barba-*

rous

rous and *Tyrannical*. *Egypt*, *Asia* and *Macedon* held up their Heads a while; but not resisting the *Torrent* of *Lewdness*, that came upon them, suffered themselves to be over-whelm'd with *Misery* and *Confusion*.

Nor has this Calamity been peculiar to *Monarchies*; for several *Republicks* have fallen by the same Mischief. That of *Lacedemon* or *Sparta*, so *Severe* in her *Constitution*, and so *Remarkable* for the Virtue of her People, and that for many Ages, at last growing slack in the Execution of her Laws, and suffering *Corruption* insensibly to Creep into her *Manners*, she became no more Considerable, but *Weak* and *Contemptible*.

The same may be said of *Athens*, the Great *School* of *Learning*, and of all the *Republicks* of *Greece* most *Famous* for her *Virtue* and *Philosophy*, when that word was understood not of *Vain Disputing* but of *Pious Living*: she no sooner fell into *Luxury*, but *Confusion* and *Revolutions* made her as *Inconsiderable*, as she had been *Great*.

Rome, as she was the Greatest *Common-Wealth*, so the greatest Example of *Gentiles* in *Virtue* and *Vice*, in *Happiness* and in *Misery*: Her *Virtue* and *Greatness* are Commemorated by *Austin* the Father, and the *latter* made the Effect of the *former*. *God* (saith he) *gave the* Romans *the Government of the World, as a Reward for their Virtue*. Their *Manners* were so Good, and their *Policy* so Plain and Just, that nothing could stand before them. And truly, they seem'd to have been employ'd by God to punish the *Impious*, and to instruct the *Barbarous Nations*: and so very Jealous was she of the *Education* of her *Youth*, that she would not suffer them to converse with the

Luxurious Greeks. But *Carelessness* with length of Time overcoming the *Remarkable Sobriety* of her *Manners*, who before seemed *Invincible*, falls into *Equal*, if not *Greater Miseries*, than those that went before her, though she had not only Warning enough from those Example, but from *Hannibal's Army* and her great Enemy: For one Winter's *Quarter* of *Hannibal* and his *Army* in the Luxurious City of *Capua* prov'd a greater Overthrow to them, than all the *Roman Consuls* and *Armies* had given them. They that had been *Victors* in so many *Battles*, turn'd *Slaves* at last to *Dancers*, *Buffoons*, *Cooks* and *Harlots*; so as from that time they never did any thing Suitable to the Reputation gain'd by their *former Actions*; but fell without much Difficulty into the *Roman Hands*. Nay, not long before, *Rome* her self encountred one of the *greatest Dangers*, that ever had befallen her by the *Corruption* of her own People, in the same Place, by the like Means: And though this *Defection* was recover'd by those that remain'd entire in their Manners; yet after the Overthrow of *Antiochus*, *Mithridates*, *Tygranes*, that the *Riches* and *Vices* of *Asia* came with a full stream upon them, the very Heart of the City became *infected*; and the Lewd *Asiaticks* had this Revenge in their own *Fall*, that they ruin'd by their *Vices* those that were no wayes able to resist by their *Force*; like the Story of the *Dying Centaure*. Thus *Pride*, *Avarice* and *Luxury* having prepared *Rome* for Destruction, it soon followed. *Virtue* now grew *Intolerable* in *Rome*, where *Vice* dared not for Ages to show its Face. The *Worthiest Men* were cut off by *Proscriptions*, *Battels* or *Murders*, as if she resolved *ipsam Virtutem exscindere*: She destroyed her own Citizens, and sent for *Strangers*

gers to protect her, which ruin'd her. Which proves, that the *Kingdom* or *State*, that, under God, doth not subsist by its own *Strength*, *Prudence* and *Virtue*, cannot stand: For the *Goths*, *Hunns* and others despised to serve those, whom they excelled in *Power* and *Virtue*, and instead of *Guarding* took their *Dominion* from them. And truly, it might rather be called a *Journey*, than a *Military Expedition*, to go and pillage *Rome*; so weak had her *Vices* made her. Thus she that was feared by all *Nations*, became the *Prey* of all *Nations* about her. So ended that *Once Potent* and *Virtuous Common-Wealth*.

The *Vandals* in *Africk* soon became *Effeminate* and *Lewd*; which brought upon themselves *speedy Ruin*. The *Gothes* set up a Powerful Kingdom in *Spain* and Part of *France*; and by the Sobriety of their *Manners* it flourished near Four Hundred Years; but its End was not Unlike the rest. Two corrupt Princes *Vnitza*, and *Roderic* by their *dissolute Example*, debauch'd the People, insomuch that men ran an Hazard to be *Virtuous*: This made their *Destruction* Easie to those whom God sent against them; which were the *Moores*, occasion'd by the *Last* of these *Kings dishonouring Count* Juliano's *Daughter*. In the Time of his *Calamity* in vain did he expect the *Aid* of those that had been the *Flatterers*, and the *Companions* of his *Vices*: His *Security* (the *Effect* of his *Luxury*) was his Ruin. For whilst he thought he had no body to *Subdue*, but his own People, by *Abusing* them he *Cut off his own Arms*, and made himself an *Easie Prey* to his *Real Enemies*: And so he perisht with his *Posterity*, that had been the *Cause* of the Mischief, which befel that Great Kingdom. However, so it came to pass, that the *Remainder* of the *Goths* mixing with the Antient *Spaniards* (to that

Day distinct) recovered the Liberty and Reputation of the Kingdom by an *Entire Reformation* of *Manners* and a *Virtue* in Converſation as *Admirable*, as the *Vices*, by which their Fathers had fallen, were *Abominable*. But the preſent impoveriſht *State* of *Spain* can tell us, they have not continued that *Virtuous Conduct* of their Anceſtors; the Increaſe of their *Vices* having decayed their *Strength*, leſſened their *People* and their *Commerce*.

But why ſhould we overlook our own Country? that, whether we conſider the *Invaſion* of the *Romans*, *Saxons* or *Normans*, it is certain the *Neglect* of *Virtue* and *Good Diſcipline*, and the *preſent Inhabitants* giving themſelves up to *Eaſe* and *Pleaſure*, was the Cauſe (if *Gildas* the *Brittain*, and *Andrew Horn* may be credited) of their overthrow: For as the *Firſt* bitterly Inveighed againſt the *Looſeneſs* of the *Brittains*, threatning them with all thoſe *Miſeries* that afterwards followed; ſo the *Laſt* tells us, that the *Brittains* having forgotten God, & being overwhelm'd with *Luxury* and *Vice*, it pleaſed God to give the Land to a poor People of the *Northen Parts* of *Germany*, called *Saxons*, that were of *plain* and *honeſt Manners*. God is *Unchangeable* in the Courſe of his *Providence* as to theſe things: *The like Cauſes produce the like Effects*, as every *Tree* doth naturally produce its own *Fruits*. 'Tis true, God is not Careleſs of the World; he *feeds the young Ravens*, *clothes the Lillies*, *takes Care of Sparrows*, and of us, ſo as *not an Hair of our Heads falls to the ground* without his Providence; but if Men deſpiſe his *Law*, hate to be Reformed, ſpend their *Time* and *Eſtate* in *Luxury* and perſiſt to work Wickedneſs; he *will viſit them in his Wrath, and conſume them in his ſore Diſpleaſure*. To Conclude, *Wars*,

Bloodſhed,

Bloodſhed, *Fires*, *Plunders*, *Waſtings*, *Raviſhments*, *Slavery* and the like, are the Miſeries that follow *Immoralities*, the *Common Miſchiefs* of *Irreligion*, the *Neglect* of *Good Diſcipline* and *Government*.

Nothing weakens Kingdoms, like *Vice*; it does not only diſpleaſe Heaven, but diſable them. All we have ſaid, proves it: But, above all, the *Iniquity* and *Voluptuouſneſs* of the *Jews*, God's Choſen, who from being the Moſt *Prudent*, *Pious* and *Victorious* People, made themſelves a *Prey* to all their Neighbours. Their *Vice* had prepared them to be the Conqueſt of the *Firſt Pretender*; and thus from *Free-men* they became *Slaves*. Is God aſleep, or does he *Change*? ſhall not the ſame *Sins* have the like *Puniſhment*? at leaſt, ſhall they not be *puniſht*? Can we believe *There is a God*, and not believe, that he is the *Rewarder*, as of the Deeds of Private Men, ſo of the Works of *Government*? Ought we to think him Careful of the *Leſſer*, and Careleſs of the *Greater*? This were to ſuppoſe he minded *Sparrows* more than Men, and that he took more Notice of Private Perſons than of *States*. But let not our *Superiors* deceive themſelves, neither *put the Evil Day afar off*; they are greatly *Accountable* to God for theſe Kingdoms. If every poor *Soul* muſt *Account* for the Employment of the *ſmall Talent* he has received from God, can we think, that thoſe *High Stewards* of God, the Great *Governours* of the World, that ſo often *Account* with all others, muſt never come to a *Reckoning* themſelves? yes; there is a *Final Seſſions*, a General *Aſſize* and a Great *Term* once for all, where he will *Judge among the Judges*, who is *Righteous in all his ways*. There *Private Men* will anſwer only for themſelves, but Rulers for the People,

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as well as for themſelves. The *Diſparity* that is *here*, will be obſerved *there*; and the *Greatneſs* of ſuch *Perſons*, as ſhall be then found *Tardy*, will be ſo far from Extenuating their *Guilt*, that it will fling *Weight* in the *Scale* againſt them. Therefore give me leave, I do beſeech you, to be *Earneſt* in my *Humble Addreſs* to you; why ſhould ye not, when none are ſo much concern'd in the *Good Intention* of it? Thus much for the *Firſt Reaſon* of my *Supplication*.

Sect. 9. *Of the Second Motive to this Addreſs.*

MY SECOND *Reaſon* urging me to this *Humble* and *Earneſt Addreſs*, is the BENEFIT of POSTERITY. I would think, that there are few People ſo *Vicious*, as to Care to ſee their *Children* ſo; and yet to me it ſeems a plain Caſe, that *As we leave the* Government, *They will find it*: If ſome *Effectual Courſe* be not taken, what with *Neglect*, and what with *Example*, *Impiety*, and the Miſeries that follow it, will be entailed upon our *Children*. Certainly, it were better the World ended with us, than that we ſhould tranſmit our *Vices*, or ſow thoſe *Evil Seeds*, in our Day, that will Ripen to their *Ruin*, and fill our Country with *Miſeries* after we are gone; thereby Expoſing it to the *Curſe* of *God* and *Violence* of our *Neighbours*. But it is an *Infelicity* we ought to bewail, that Men are Apt to prefer the *Baſe Pleaſures* of their *Preſent Extravagancies* to all Endeavours after a *Future Benefit*; which beſides the *Guilt* they draw upon themſelves, our *Poor Poſterity* muſt be greatly *injur'd* thereby, who will find

find those Debts and Incumbrances harder to pay, then all the rest we can leave them under. Upon this Occasion I shall take the Freedom to say something of *Education*.

The Truth is, we are so much out of Order in the *Education* of our *Youth*, that I wish I could say, that we had only the Sin of *Neglect* to answer for. I fear, the *Care* has been rather to *Educate* them in a Way of such *Vanity*, as ends in great *Inconveniencies* here, and must needs find *Vexation* of *Spirit* hereafter. Our *Universities* have made more *Loose*, than *Learned*: and what *Extravagancy* is begun there, is Usually perfected Abroad, or at our own *Inns* of *Courts* at Home; that now and then afford us a few *Able Lawyers*; but the Generality are like the *Man* of *Old*, who return'd home *Seven times Worse than he went out*. The *Genius* of this *Nation* is not Inferior to any in the World; 'tis *Industrious*, 'tis *Wise*, 'tis *Honest*, 'tis *Valiant*, yet *Soft* and *Merciful*. And (without Partiality) we have had Men, that have excelled in *Every Worthy Qualification*: But I must needs say, it has been more owing to the Goodness of God in the Disposition of our *Natures*, than the *Prudence* and *Care* of those who had the Charge of their *Education*. It was the Saying of a *Wise Man*; *Train up a Child in the Way he should go*; *and when he is Old, he will not depart from it.* Prov. 22. 6. This is prov'd to us every Day; but it is in the Wrong Way, in the Way of *Idleness*, *Wantonness* and *Impurity* of *Manners*. It is worth while and *High Time* to make the Experiment the other Way; to try what the *Suppression* of *Vice* and the *Encouragement* of *Virtue* will do: In this our *Superiors* must begin,

begin, and give their *Example*, as well as ſhew their *Power*. There is ſcarcely any one thing, that ſo much needs the Wiſdom of the *Nation* in the Contrivance of a *New Law*, as the *Education* of our *Youth*, whether we conſider the Piety or Prudence of our *Manners*, the *Good Life* or Juſt Policy of the *Government*. There is ſuch an Example of what *Induſtry* may do, in the Practice of the *Jeſuits*, that I hope the *Preſent Conjuncture* will make the Propoſal of the thing more *Welcome* to you.

Note, The *Jeſuits Intereſt*, the Greateſt in the *Roman Church*.

That the *Intereſt* of the *Jeſuits* is the Greateſt in the *Roman Church* and *Empire*, is ſo far from being doubted, that all *Proteſtants* wiſh it were; It is our *Trouble* rather than our *Scruple*: It may be, ſome other *Orders* are of the ſame Mind, being much Ecclipſed ſince the *Riſe* of this *Great Intereſt*. They firſt appeared about the time of the *Reformation*; and apply'd themſelves with all *Conceivable Induſtry* to ſecure the *Tottering Papacy* againſt the Progreſs of it. In this *Attempt* they Ventur'd ſo much farther, than any of their *Predeceſſors* in the Church; that they have been eſteemed, of *Merit*, the Great Miniſters and *Governours* of the *Chair* for ſome *Laſt Ages*. Indeed, they have almoſt Engroſſed the whole Power of *Church* and *State* to themſelves in ſeveral Principalities and Kingdoms. To them all other *Orders* ſeem but *Small Retailers*: Their Great *Politicians*, their *Philoſophers*, *Orators*, *Hiſtorians* and *Mathematicians* are generally found amongſt this Society; ſo as we ſcarce ſee any thing of *Note* come out from Men of that Religion, which is not ſubſcribed E. S. J. The Fame and Apprehenſion of their Extraordinary *Learning*, and the *Arts* they have

have to recommend it, have made their *Order* the *Choice* of moſt *Princes* and *Men* of *Quality* of that Religion for the *Education* of their Children; in whom they have Carefully inſtill'd, with their Inſtructions and Principles, that *peculiar Reſpect* to their own *Society*, as hath greatly ſerv'd to the *Advancement* of it, when they have grown to *Age* and *Power*.

But that which above all other *Stratagems* hath prevailed to extend their Dominion in the *Roman Church*, has been their *Erecting* of *Schools*, where they have *Colledges*, for the *Free Education* of *Youth*: The very Doing of it *Gratis* makes it look like *Charity* with the *Poor*, that have little to give; and with the *Rich*, that ſeldom love to part with Money, to be ſure, it is no *Objection*. Thus Obliging the *Parents*, they *next* fall to making themſelves *Grateful* with the *Children*: And here they Exerciſe not a little *Skill*. They Strictly Survey and Obſerve the Divers *Humors* and *Diſpoſitions* of their Schollars, and take great Care not to baulk their Capacity by *Croſs* or *Unſuitable Studies*: But when once they are fixed, every *Youth*, according to his *Genius*, it is not Eaſie to be believed, what pains they take to Allure them to their *Studies*; how they will Tempt them with *Childiſh Rewards*, and Excite them to their Book by raiſing an *Emulation* among them: So that to *Excell* is more than a *Rod*; and *Victory*, than any *Chaſtiſement* whatever. By theſe *Arts* they fit all Capacities with *Snitable Study*, and Cultivate them to the Pitch of *Learning*, they are capable of; and all with that *Obligation* upon the *Youth* to Love them; that from thence forward they become *Partial Devotees* to the *Advancement* of the Honor and Intereſt of that *Order*. To Conclude, they have got into their Hands the *Education* of the Gene-

Generality of the *Youth* of the *Romish Religion* in every Country, from the *King* to the *Peasant*; and being Masters of them, when Boys, they grow Governors and Confessors to them, when they are Men; so as all seem to have fallen into their Hands; and being but one *Entire Interest* throughout the World, and maintaining a *most punctual Correspondence*, they must needs have the Knowledge and Disposal of the *Affairs* of *States* and *Kingdoms* by that Share, they have in the *Counsels* of *Princes*, and that *great Reliance* that is upon their Judgment and Ability. This, if we regard only the *Romish Religion*, shews great *Wit*, *Design* and *Industry*; But if we consider well how Formidable these Arts render them to *Protestant Kingdoms*, it will become us to use our utmost Prudence to *Secure our selves*. And there seems not to me a more Effectual Remedy, than a *Wise* and *Virtuous Education* of our *Youth*. In order to it, let us use *Methods* not inferior to theirs, but for *better Ends*: Let us employ our Skill to improve the Childrens *Natural Abilities*, to excite them to *Virtue* and Endear the *True Interest* of their own Country to them. I will briefly set down, what at present occurs to me as a good *Way* of *Education*.

I. *First*, Let Care be taken *To breed up Youth in* MORALITY: *Virtue* prepares the Mind, helps the Understanding and gives Industry to compass what is desired. I would have no *Books* used in Schools, in which there may be the least *Indecency*. There were, and not without Reason, Ancient Canons against the *Reading* of such *Heathen Authors*; and not a few *Learned* and *Sober Men* have rebuked that Practice amongst us. It is an Affront to *Christianity*, yea, to our *Natures*, to fetch our *Wit* or our *Manners* from

from them. It were well, if ſome Tracts of *Moral Virtues* and *Invectives* againſt *Vice* were written in thoſe *Languages* we would have *Youth* to learn; for in ſuch *Diſcourſes* they might obtain *Good Manners* with the *Languages*; whereas by prefering *Schools* in *Heathen Authors*, our *Youth* has learned *Baſe Obſcenities* and a *Corrupt Converſation*.

II. In the *Next* place, I would propoſe ſome of the more obvious and eaſier Parts of *Mathematicks*, and the Knowledge of *Plants* and *Natural Bodies*, to be compos'd, on purpoſe, after a *Familiar Manner*, that they may be Inſtructed in the Knowledge of *Nature*, and learn *Things* at the ſame time they learn *Words*: It is a moſt reprovable Ignorance that we know not our own Natures, the World we are of and in, the Parts that compoſe it, and their Nature and Service, their *Simpathys* and *Antipithys*. *Nature* is an Excellent Book, eaſie, uſeful, pleaſant and profitable; but how few, alas! are learned either in the *Macrocoſm* or their *Microcoſm*? I wiſh this were better underſtood, it would be both our Honour and our Advantage.

III. The *Laſt* Sort of Books, which I would recommend, and are in my Opinion moſt ſuitable to their Maturity of *Age* and *Underſtanding*, are ſuch as relate to the *Hiſtories* and *Tranſactions* of our own *Kingdom*; the *Intereſt* of the True *Proteſtant Religion* and *Civil Policy* amongſt us. But becauſe there are very few (if any) of theſe *Diſcourſes* extant, it were Worth the Care of our *Superiors*, and an Act deſerving Praiſe, that ſome *Skilful*, *Sober* and *Judicious Men* were ſet to work for the Compoſure of ſome *ſmall Tracts* of this Nature; and as an Appendix to the whole, that there might be a *Summary* of the

Moſt

Moſt Virtuous and *Infamous Actions* of *Former Times*, with the *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* they have received from God and Juſt Government; that by the Power of *Example* they may be deterr'd from *Vice*, and provoked to an Honeſt *Emulation* of the *Virtues* and *Reputation* of the *Antients*.

IV. In the *Fourth* place, *Croſs not the* Genius *of your Youth*, but Match their *Talents* well, for if you do not ſute their *Studies* to their *Underſtanding*, it will be *Drawing up Hill*, *Going againſt the Grain* or *Swimming againſt the Tide*: That which will be gain'd, will be little; and with ſo much *Labour* and *Time* too, as will not quit Coſt. It ſhould be greatly the Care of thoſe, who have the Charge of *Youth*, to make the Wayes of *Learning Eaſie* and *Chearful*; which leadeth me to my laſt Obſervation upon this Head.

V. Let all *Honeſt Arts* be uſed by Maſters *of* Schools *to provoke* their Youth *to Learning* without much Fierceneſs *or* Beating: For that Sort of *Education* has nothing of the *Free* and *Generous Diſpoſition* in it; which might be raiſed and improved in *Youth* by more *Gentle* and *Reaſonable Methods*. They that are taught to obey only for Baſe *Fear*, make *Fear* and not *Reaſon* the Rule of their Obedience; and this grows up in too many with their Age, that they turn meer *Mercenaries* and only worſhip *Violence*. In ſhort, Make *Inſtruction Eaſie*, *Correction Reaſonable*: *Convince* them of their Miſcarriage with *Mildneſs*, then *Pardon* them: and finally excite them to *Amendment* by Smiles and Favour. This awakens the *Noble Part* and excites *Youth* to perform that, which may ingratiate them with their *Tutors*; who, if they at any time commit an *Error*, ſhould rather ſhew themſelves affectionatel

onately *Sorry* for them, than *bitterly Angry*. *Plato* being greatly diſpleaſed with his Servant, and going about to Correct him, gave the *Wand* to one that ſtood by, ſaying; *Do thou beat him, for I am Angry*. *Chaſtizement* ſhould be uſed with Reaſon and *Reluctancy*: A *Diſcreet* and *Cool* Hand may direct the Blow right and hit the Mark, when Men of *Fury* rather eaſe their Paſſion, than mend their *Youth*; eſpecially, if the *Correction* exceed the *Fault*; for that hardens. This very *Bruitiſhneſs* is more *Injurious* to the Nature of our *Youth*, than uſually their *Inſtruction* is *beneficial*.

Upon the whole Matter I take the Freedom to ſay, That if we would *Preſerve* our *Government*, we muſt endear it to the People. To do this, beſides the neceſſity of preſent *Juſt* and *Wiſe things*, we muſt *ſecure* the *Youth*: And this is not to be done but by the Amendment of the *Way* of their *Education*, and that with all Conceivable Speed and Diligence. I ſay, the *Government* is Highly oblig'd: It is a ſort of *Truſtee* for the *Youth* of the Kingdom, who, though now *Minors*: yet, will have the *Government*, when we are gone. Therefore depreſs *Vice* and cheriſh *Virtue*, that, through *good Education*, they may become *Good*; which will truly render them *Happy* in this World, and a Good Way fitted for that which is to come. If this be done, they will owe more to your *Memories* for their *Education*, than for their *Eſtates*.

Sect. 10. *Of the third and laſt Motive for this Addreſs.*

MY THIRD and *Laſt Reaſon* for this *Serious Supplication* to the *Civil Magiſtrate* is ſo Great, that I find difficulty to expreſs it: 'Tis the GLORY of that GOD, that *made* us; that hath ſo often *deliver'd* us, and doth ſo plentifully provide for us; who *ſent his Son into the World* to *ſave* us, and waits every Day to be *Good* and *Gracious* to us. But he hath ſo particularly and with that *tranſcendency* ſet the Marks of his *Favour* upon you, both in your *Reſtoration* and *Protection*, as ſcarce any Age can parallel. O! Let a *ſteady Virtue* be the Return of theſe *Mercies*, and a *pious Care* to Retrieve and Encourage *Morality*, which is the very *Baſis* of our *Religion* and *Government*, be the *Humble Token* of your *Gratitude*: It is your Office; *you do but comply with the Reaſon* of your own *Inſtitution*: God expects it and *Good Men* beſeech it from you. There is much in your Power at this time, to make this the ISLAND OF PEACE AND LASTING TRANQUILITY. Loſe not, I beſeech you, the *Preſent Opportunity*: Revive the Laws againſt theſe *Groſs Iniquities*; Terrifie all *Evil-Doers*, and Cheriſh them that do well: Provide for the *Poor*, that their *Stock* may not be Abus'd, nor their *Cries* pierce Heaven againſt you becauſe of *Neglect*; that God may yet *Vouchſafe* to ſpare us.

Your Sins (ſaid God of Old) *have with-held Good Things from you*: *'Tis* Righteouſneſs *that exalts a Nation*;

Nation; *but* Sin *is the Reproach of any people.* Would ye *Proſper*? then pleaſe God; and if ye will *pleaſe* him, ye muſt put away the *Wicked* from amongſt you; at leaſt, from Power and Offices in the Government; they that would rule others ſhould be juſt themſelves, and of Good Lives. It was both his Complaint and the Cauſe of his Judgment in Former Ages: *There are found* Wicked Men *among my people, they lay Wait, as he that ſetteth Snares; they ſet a Trap, they catch Men: As a Cage is full of Birds, ſo are their Houſes full of Deceit: Therefore they are become Great and waxen Rich; they are waxen Fat, they ſhine. They* OVERPASS (*or* overlook) *the Deeds of the Wicked, they Judge not the Cauſe of the Fatherleſs; yet they proſper.* Theſe were no Small Folks, but *Men* of *Power*; ſuch as got largely by the *Government*, and employed their *Authority* to Enrich themſelves, and not to relieve the *Oppreſſed.* I muſt needs ſay (and can with great Truth) That *Miſ-government* is the Occaſion, though the *Devil* be the Cauſe of that *Miſchief* and *Ruin*, that attend Nations.

What *Kingdoms* hath God deſtroyed, and *Cities* turn'd into *Rubbiſh*, becauſe of *National Evils*; too much occaſioned by the *Remiſneſs* of *Magiſtrates*? The *ſlack Hand*, that the *Rulers* of *Iſrael* held over the Manners of that *Unhappy people*, made Way for their Unſubjected Paſſions and Corrupt Affections to break out into the *Vileſt Impieties*: But if Men ſhall be left to their own *Licentiouſneſs*, to *Commit Sin with Greedineſs*, and with Impunity depiſe the *Laws* of *God* and *Men*, all I can ſay is this; God, who is *Jealous* of his Glory, the Great *Avenger* of his Law upon *Rebellious Nations*, will with-hold

his *Mercies*, and haſten his *Judgments* upon ours.

Hear the Word *of the* Lord (ſaith the Prophet *Hoſea*) *ye Children of* Iſrael; *for the*
Hoſ. 4. 1, 2, 3. *Lord hath a Controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land: by* Swearing, *and* Lying, *and* Killing, *and* Stealing *and* Committing Adultery *they break out, and Blood touches Blood; therefore ſhall the Land mourn.* And by the Prophet *Malachi* God threatens that people thus:
Mal. 3. 5. *I will come near to you, and I will be a ſwift Witneſs againſt* Sorcerers, *and againſt the* Adulterers, *and againſt* Falſe Swearers *and ſuch as fear not me, ſaith the* Lord *of* Hoſts. Yea, to that Degee, was that *Magiſtracy* degenerated, that they thought it a *Vain Thing* to ſerve God, and keep his Commandments. They called the Proud *Happy*; yea, they that *workt Wickedneſs were ſet up*, they were Advanced to places of *Honour* and *Truſt*, and they that tempted God, were *deliver'd*: But the *Word* of the *Lord* was unto them a *Reproach*; they had no Delight in it: They made a Mock at Sin, laid Snares for the Innocent, and (*like us*) made Men *Offenders for a Word*, for a *good Word*, a *Word* of *Reproof* or an *Harmleſs Opinion*. Well, but what followed? *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord, ſhall not my Soul be Avenged on ſuch a Nation as this*? O that Magiſtrates would hear this! God as truly ſpeaks to us by the Scripture now, as he did by them that writ it then to the *Jews*. Truly, 'tis our very Caſe; the ſame *Impieties* are daily found amongſt us: Certainly God is offended, his Spirit grieved, and Heaven is ſet againſt us. For the Lord's ſake Do your *Duty* in this preſent *Conjuncture*, and miſtake not your *Meaſures*: Let every thing

thing have its *Due Weight* and *Place* with you; that is the Way to *Succeed*. Ye are now Warmly concern'd in the *Diſcovery* and *Proſecution* of a *Jeſuitical Plot*; a Deſign, it ſeems, to Deſtroy the *King* and blow up your *Religion* and Wreſt the *Government* out of your Hands: In this, doubtleſs, ye do well; and all *juſt Care* to preſerve the Peace of the Kingdom from ſuch *Miſchievous Conſpiracies*, is *Moſt Commendable* in you, and deſerves and draws all *Due Acknowledgments* from Honeſt and *Engliſh* Minds: But, I beſeech you, Let God have a ſhare in your *Concern*: Remember him as well as Your ſelves. You confeſs, this Great *Diſcovery* is only owing to his Goodneſs; ſhall we be then more *Zealous* for our own *ſafety*, than for his *Glory*? who, when all is done, *muſt Save* us or we are *Loſt*. Let us make him our *Friend*, who is ſtronger than the *Combinations* of all our *Enemies*; and *guard our ſelves* againſt that which can only bring their *Evil Devices* to paſs; alas! OUR SIN. That is their *ſtrength* and the *Poyſon* of their *Arrows*: Let us *confeſs* and *forſake* it; let us Humble our ſelves under the *mighty Hand* of *God*, that it may not *Grind us to Powder*. And truly, if our hearts were not harder than *Adamants*, this Teſtimony he has given us of his *Care* over us, notwithſtanding all our repeated *Provocations* given to him, ſhould break us into *deep Contrition*. O! let his Long-ſuffering prevail upon us to *Unfeigned Repentance*! then ſhall we ſtand *Clear Men* before God; and if ſo, he will quickly make our *Enemies* to fly before us.

If there be any Truth in *Sacred Story*, any Credit to be given to *Chriſtian Religion* or the *Experience* of Ages, This that I ſay of *God* and *Government*

is True: And it is our *Duty*, yea, our *Intereſt*, the trueſt and eaſieſt Way to *Safety*. God has decreed, *That Nation and Kingdom, that will not ſerve him, ſhall periſh, yea, thoſe Nations ſhall be utterly waſted* (Iſa. 60. 12.) *But Great is their Peace, that Love thy Law; It ſhall go well with the Righteous, but it ſhall go Ill with the Wicked*: upon them God hath threatned to *Rain Snares, Difficulties, Perplexities*; they ſhall not know which way to turn themſelves. Pſal. 1.9,156. I am not againſt the Uſe of *Means*: Men have not *Wiſdom* and *Power* for nothing; but then let them uſe them in the *Fear* and *Name* of *God: Curſed is he that putteth his Strength in Man, and his Confidence in the Arm of Fleſh.* And in another place, *Wo to them that go down to* Egypt *for Help, and ſtay on Horſes and truſt in Chariots, becauſe they are many; and in Horſmen, becauſe they are very ſtrong: but they look not to the* Holy One *of* Iſrael, *neither ſeek the Lord.* Iſa. 31. 1, 2. 'Twas his Reproof to the *Nation* that profeſſed him, that they ſhould ſeek to the *ſtratagems*, and rely upon the *ſtrength* of *Heathen Nations*, rather than upon *Faith* in him, the Living God: And the Reaſon he gives in the *third verſe* is great, *viz. The* Egyptians *are Men and not God, and their Horſes* Fleſh, *and not* Spirit: *when the Lord ſhall ſtretch out his Hand, both he that helpeth ſhall fall, and he that is holpen ſhall fall down, and they all ſhall fall together.* If then the Hand of God be ſo much ſtronger than Man, for the Lord's ſake, let us lay hold of it; let *That* fight our *Battels* and decide the *Controverſie*: *He that trueſteth in the Lord, ſhall never be confounded.* It was the ſaying of a Great King and a Great Conqueror, *By thee I have leaped over a Wall, by thee I*

have

have run through a Troop, &c. Pſal. 18. 19. who preſerved the *Iſraelites* from *Pharaoh's fury*, threw down the *Walls* of *Jericho*, when the Prieſts *blew* the *Rams-horns*, and gave *Gideon* his mighty Victories; with more of the like kind. And we muſt not think, that *God* is alter'd, *Faith* is in it ſelf weaken'd, that no *Wonders* are reſerved for the *Latter* and *Chriſtian Ages*. The Truth is, *Faith* (generally ſpeaking) is loſt, and that *holy Confidence* now adays is eſteemed *Preſumption*: 'Tis become a *Principle*, that *ſuch things are not to be expected*; ſo that we ſhut up, or bar from our ſelves the True and moſt Powerful *Way* of *Deliverance*. Let us not betake our ſelves to the *common Arts* and *Stratagems* of *Nations*, Incredulous of the Strength of the God of *Iſrael*, who is the God of *True Chriſtians* too. O! that our *Faith* may be greater than our *Arms*! no matter for the *ſtrength* of our *Enemies*, if *God* be our *ſtrength*: And truly, 'tis vain to acknowledge a *Providence* in Humane Things, and not to confide in him and rely upon him that provides for us. *I was Young*, (ſaid *David*) *and now I am Old, but I never ſaw the Righteous forſaken, nor his Seed begging Bread*: It ſhall go well with the *Righteous*. Therefore fear God, put away the Evil that provokes him, and truſt not in *man*, but in the *Living God*, and *it ſhall yet go well with* England.

What *Noble Feats* did the Ancients do by FAITH! and ſhall *Chriſtians* have leſs than *Jews* had? Is not *God the ſame?* yes; he is *Un-changeable*: But Alas! we are not the ſame; that's our *Miſchief*. Chriſt did not many *Mighty Works* in ſome places, becauſe they *believed* not in him: If our

Confidence be not in *God*, our *Hopes* will prove *Vain*, and our *Succeſs* will *fail* us. We ſhall but have MEN of our ſide, not God; *Fleſh* and not Spirit: And if we ſhould be ſo Unhappy as to make this our *ſtrength*, both the *Helpers* and *Helped* will fall together. But let *Nineveh* teach us better things, and may her *Zealous King* be the Example of ours; and let all the People ſay *Amen*! The *Suitableneſs* of which Story to our preſent Occaſion makes me chuſe to End this *Firſt Part* of my *Addreſs* with it.

For Word came unto the King of Nineveh; *Yet Forty Dayes, and* Nineveh *ſhall be Overthrown. And he Aroſe from his Throne, and he laid his Robe from him, and covered him with Sack-cloth, and ſate in Aſhes. And he cauſed it to be proclaimed and publiſhed through* Nineveh (*by the Decree of the King and his* Nobles) *ſaying*; *Let neither Man nor Beaſt, Herd nor Flock taſte any thing*; *let them not feed, nor drink Water. But let Man and Beaſt be covered with Sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea,* LET THEM TURN EVERY ONE FROM HIS EVIL WAY, *and from the* Violence, *that is in their Hands. Who can tell, if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his Fierce Anger, that we periſh not. And God ſaw their Works, that they turn'd from their* Evil Way; *and God repented from the* Evil, *that he ſaid, that he would do unto them, and he did it not,* Jon. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

O God! Thou that workeſt Wonders in the Earth, whoſe Power cannot be Controled, in whoſe Hands are the Souls of Men and the Spirits of all Fleſh, who canſt turn them in a Moment; Turn *thou the Hearts of* King *and* People *unto thee, and* One unto another. *Do thou Proclaim a* FAST FROM SIN *throughout theſe* Sinful Kingdoms; *let* Wickedneſs *and* Oppreſſion *find no place among us. Turn away thy* Fierce Wrath, *Wipe away our Reproach, and Love us* Freely, *O God! for thy dear* Son's *ſake.*

THE

THE SECOND PART OF THE Addreſs to Proteſtants UPON THE Preſent Conjuncture.

Sect. 1. *Of the Motives to this Second Part of the Addreſs.*

HAving finiſht the *Firſt Part* of my *Addreſs* relating to the *Immoralities* of the *Times*, and left it with the CIVIL MAGISTRATE, as in Conſcience, I found my ſelf Oblig'd to do, whoſe *Peculiar Charge* it is, and, I Earneſtly and Humbly deſire and pray that it may be his Great Care Effectually to Rebuke them, I ſhall betake my ſelf to the *Second Part* of this *Addreſs*, that more immediately concerns us as *Profeſt Chriſtians* and *Proteſtants*. But before I begin, I deſire to premiſe and do with much *Sincerity* Declare that I intend not the *Reproach* of any *Perſon* or *Party*: I am weary with ſeeing *ſo much of it in the World*: It gains nothing, that is worth keeping; but often *hardens*, what 'tis our Duty to endeavour to *ſoften* and *win*.

But

But if, without Offence, I may ſpeak the Truth, that which, to the beſt of my Underſtanding, tends to the *Preſent Settlement* and *Future Felicity* of my Poor Country, I ſhall, by God's Help, deliver my ſelf with the *Modeſty*, *Plainneſs* and *Integrity*, that becomes a *Chriſtian*, a *Proteſtant*, and an *Engliſh-Man*.

Thoſe *Capital Sins* and *Errors* that relate to the ECCLESIASTICAL STATE or Church-Capacity of theſe Kingdoms, and which are ſo Inconſiſtant with *Chriſtian Religion* and pureſt *Proteſtancy*, and that, above all, diſpleaſe Almighty God, are——

Firſt, *Making* Opinions Articles *of* Faith, *at leaſt giving them the* Reputation of Faith, *and making them the* Bond *of* Chriſtian Society.

Secondly, *Miſtaking the* Nature *of True* Faith, *and taking that for* Faith, *which is not* Goſpel-Faith.

Thirdly, *Debaſing the true* Value *of* Morality *under pretence of* Higher Things, *miſtaking much of the very* End *of* Chriſt's Coming.

Fourthly, *Preferring* Humane Authority *above* Reaſon *and Truth*.

Fifthly, *Propagating* Faith *by* Force, *and Impoſing Religion by* Worldly Compulſion.

Theſe I take to be the *Church-Evils*, that have too much and too long prevailed even in theſe Parts of the *Reformed World*: And though the *Roman Church* hath chiefly tranſcended other *Societies* in theſe *Errors*, and may, in a ſenſe, be ſaid to be the *Mother* of them, She from whom they took *Birth*, by whom they were brought forth and have been propagated in *Chriſtendom*, yet there hath not been that

that *Integrity* to the *nature* of *Chriſtianity*, and *Firſt Reaſon* of *Reformation* from the *Papacy* in our own Country, as had been and is our Duty to conſerve.

Sect. 2. *Of* Opinions *paſſing for* Faith.

FIrſt, *That* Opinions *paſs for* Faith, *and are made* Articles *of* Faith, *and are enjoyn'd to be embrac'd as the* Bond *of* Communion.

That this is ſo, let us take the moſt *impartial View* we can, and we ſhall find it to be true, both of the *National* and many other *ſelect Societies*. That I may be underſtood in the Signification of the word OPINIONS, I explain it thus: "Opinions "*are all thoſe* Propoſitions *or* Concluſions *made by* "*Men* Doctrines *of* Faith *and* Articles *of* Commu- "nion, *which either are not* Expreſly *laid down in* "Scripture, *or not ſo evidently* Deduceable *from* "Scripture, *as to leave no* occaſion *of* Doubt *in their* "*Minds of the Truth of them, who ſincerely and reve-* "*rently believe the* Text: *or laſtly ſuch, as have no* "*New or* Credible Revelation *to vouch them.*

That this is our Caſe, let the ſeveral *Confeſſions* of *Faith* publiſhed by almoſt every *Party* in *England* be peruſed, and you will find ſuch *Propoſitions* tranſlated into *Doctrines* of *Faith* and *Articles* of *Communion*, as are, *firſt*, not only *not expreſs'd in Scripture*, but, perhaps *not well deduceable from Scripture*: And if one *Party* may be but believ'd againſt another, we can want no *Evidence* to prove what we ſay. And, in the *next* place, ſuch as are, though not *expreſt*, yet it

it may be, *deduceable* as to the *matter* of them, are either carried ſo high, ſpun ſo fine or ſo diſguiſed by *barbarous School-Terms*, that they are rather a *Bone* of *Contention*, than a *Bond* of *Concord* to Religious Societies. Yet this has been the Unhappineſs even of this Kingdom after all the Light of *Reformation*, which God hath graciouſly ſent amongſt us, *Men are to be received or rejected for denying or owning of ſuch Propoſitions.* Wilt thou be an *Epiſcopalian*? Then Sign the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, Renounce the *Covenant* and Conform to the Diſcipline and *Juriſdiction* of the *Church* of *England.* Wilt thou be a *Presbyterian*? Embrace and Keep the *Covenant*, ſubſcribe the *Weſtminſter-Confeſſion* and *Directory*: And ſo on to the End of every Society, that grounds Communion upon *Conformity* to ſuch *Propoſitions* and *Articles* of Faith.

What a Stir have we had in *England* about the word Ἐπίσκοπος! He that ſays it ſignifies an *Higher Office* than Πρεσβύτερος, ſhall have no part or fellowſhip with us: On t'other hand, they that will debaſe *Epiſcopos* to *Presbuteros* and turn *Levellers* or *Degraders* of *Epiſcopal Dignity*, ſhall be *Excommunicated, ſilenced, puniſh't.* Is not this plain *Fact?* can any deny it, that love Truth more then a *Party?* The Fire kindled by this *Contention*, hath warm'd the Hands of *Violence:* It had been well, if Men had entertain'd *Equal Zeal* againſt *Impiety*, and been but half as much *Enemies* to Sin, as they have been againſt one another on ſuch to accounts.

If we look a little back, we ſhall find, that the Debate of *Free-Will* and *Unconditional Reprobation* filled this Kingdom with *Uncharitableneſs* and *Diviſion.* In the Arch-Epiſcopacy of *Abbot* (reputed

in

in himſelf a *Good Man*) who ever held, that Chriſt ſo died for *all Men*, that *all men might be ſaved*, (if they would accept the *means*) and that none were abſolutely decreed to *Eternal Reprobation*, was reputed an *Heretick*, and *Excommunicated* as an Enemy to the *Free Grace* of *God*, which, it ſeems, at that time of day lay in *being Narrow*.

In the Reign of Arch-Biſhop *Laud* the *Tide turn's*: And thoſe that hold an *abſolute Election* and *Reprobation* without regard had to the *Good* or *Evil Actions* of Men, and aſſert, that *Chriſt only died for the* Elect, *and not for all*, muſt be diſcountenanced, diſplaced and pointed at as *men* out of *faſhion*, though at the ſame time *Conſcientious*, *Sober* and (at worſt) *miſtaken*; to be pittied rather than perſecuted, and informed and not deſtroyed.

This Controverſie begot the *Synod* of Dort: he that reads the *Epiſtles* of that Judicious man *J. Hails*, of *Eaton*-Colledge, upon the Matter and Conduct of that *Aſſembly*, will find cauſe of being ſad at Heart; too many of them talking of *Religion* without the *Spirit* of it. *Men*, perhaps, *learned* in Books, but few of the *ſticklers* gave any great Teſtimony of their Proficiency in that *Science*, which is firſt *pure*, then *peaceable*, *gentle* and *eaſie to be entreated*. This Flame kindled between *Arminius* and *Epiſcopius*, &c. for the *Remonſtrants*, and *Gomarus*, *Sibrandus*, &c. for the *Predeſtinarians*, diſtracted *Holland* not a little, and had an *ill influence* upon the *Affairs* of *England*, at leaſt ſo far, as concerned the *Church*. But the Mournfulleſt part of that Hiſtory is the Ill Uſage *Martinius Crocius*, the Biſhop of *Landaff* and others had; who, though they were acknowledg'd to be *ſound* in the *Faith* of thoſe Times, which generally

rally followed the Judgment of *Calvin*, as to the *main points* controverted, yet if at any time they appeared moderate in their Behaviour, gentle in their Words, and for *Accommodation* in ſome particulars with the *Remonſtrators* or *Free-willers*; *Gomarus* and his Followers, not obſerving the Gravity due to the *Aſſembly*, the Rules of *Debate*, and leaſt of all the Meekneſs of *Chriſtian Communion*, *fell foul* of their Brethren, reproached their Tenderneſs, and began to fix Treachery upon their *ſober Endeavours* of *Accommodation*; as if they intended to execute as well as maintain their *Reprobation*, and blow up their *Friends* rather than not deſtroy their *Adverſaries*.

But if we will riſe higher in our Enquiry, and view the *Miſchiefs* of *Earlier Times*, flowing from this practice, the *fourth* and *fifth Centuries* after Chriſt will furniſh us with *Inſtances* enough. We cannot poſſibly forget the *heavy Life* ſome men made about the Obſervation of *Eaſter-Day*, as if their *Eternal Happineſs* had been in *Jeopardy*: For ſo far were they degenerated from the *Love* and *Meekneſs* of *Chriſtianity*, that about keeping of a *Day*, which perhaps was no part, but to be ſure, no *Eſſential part* of the *Chriſtian Religion*, they fell to pieces; *reproach'd*, *revil'd*, *hated* and *perſecuted* one another. A *Day* was more to them than *Chriſt*, who was the *Lord* and *End* of *Days*; and *Victory* over Brethren ſweeter than the *Peace* and *Concord* of the *Church*, the Great Command of *Jeſus*, whom they called Lord.

But the Remarkable and *Tragical Story* of *Alexander* Biſhop of *Alexandria* and *Arius* his Prieſt, in their known Debate about the *Nature* and *Exiſtance* of

of the *Son* of *God*, with the lamentable *Conſequences* thereof, (as all Writers upon that *Subject* have related) witneſſeth to the truth of what I ſay. The Biſhop's *Curioſity*, and the *Strictneſs* of *Arius*; the *Preſumption* of the one to expound beyond the *Evidence* and *Simplicity* of the *Text*, and the *Captious Humor* of the other, that would not bate the Biſhop any thing for his *Age* or *Rank* he held in the *Church*, but *Logically* exacted the *Utmoſt Farthing* of the Reckoning, from his old Paſtor, firſt began the *Fray*: Which, as it became the *Perplexity* of *Church* and *State* ſome Ages, ſo it raged to *Blood*; and thoſe that had been perſecuted like *Sheep* by the *Heathen* not long before, turned *Wolves* againſt each other, and made ſport for the *Infidel*, doing their work to their own Deſtruction. Nay, ſo much more *Chriſtian* was *Themiſtius* the *Philoſopher*, that he in his *Oration*, called CONSUL, commended the Emperour *Jovianus* for his *Moderation*, *and adviſed him to give that* Liberty *of* Conſcience, *which profeſt* Chriſtians *refuſed to allow each other*; who ſeemed to think, they never did God *better Service*, than in *Sacrificing one another for Religion*, even as ſoon as ever they had eſcaped the *Heathen's* Shambles.

Did we duly reflect upon the *unnatural Heats*, *Diviſions* and *Excommunications* among them, the many *Councils* that were called, the ſtrong and tedious *Debates* held, the *Tranſlations* of *Sees*, the *Anathemas*, the *Baniſhments*, *Wars*, *Sackings*, *Fires* and *Blood-ſhed* that followed this Unnatural Diviſion, that ſprang from ſo nice a Controverſie, one would verily believe no leſs than that *Religion* it ſelf had been in *Utmoſt Hazard*; that *Judaiſm* or *Paganiſm* were over-running Chriſtianity; and not, that all this

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Stir had been made about an *Iota*: For the whole Queſtion was, *Whether* Homouſia *or* Homoiuſia *ſhould be received for Faith*? in which the difference is but the *ſingle Letter*, *I*: Certainly, we muſt do Violence to our Underſtanding, if we can think that theſe men were *Followers* of that *Jeſus* that *Loved his Enemies and gave his Blood for the World*, who hated their Brethren and *ſhed one anothers Blood* for Opinions: The *Heathen-Philoſphers* never were ſo *Barbarous* to one another, but maintained a better underſtanding and behaviour in their differences.

But how eaſily might all theſe *Confuſions* have been prevented, if their *Faith* about Chriſt had been deliver'd in the *Words* of *Scripture*; ſince all ſides pretend to believe the *Text*? And Why ſhould any man preſume to be Wiſer or plainer in matters of Faith than the *Holy Ghoſt*? 'Tis ſtrange, that *God* and *Chriſt* ſhould be wanting to expreſs or diſcover their own mind, or that the words uſed by the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſhould have that Shortneſs, *Ambiguity* or *Obliquity* in them, that our *frail Capacities* ſhould be needed to make them more Eaſie, Proper and Intelligible. But that we ſhould ſcarcely deliver any one *Article* of *Faith* in *Scripture-Terms*, and yet make ſuch *Acts* the *Rule* and *Bond* of *Chriſtian Communion*, is, in my Judgment, an Offence hainous againſt *God* and *Holy Scripture*, and very Injurious to *Chriſtian Charity* and *Fellowſhip*. Who can expreſs any Man's mind ſo fully, as himſelf? and ſhall we allow that Liberty to our ſelves, and refuſe it to God? *The Scriptures came not in Old time* (ſaid the Apoſtle *Peter*) *by the Will of Man*; *but holy Men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the* Holy Ghoſt. Who 2 Pet. 1. 21,

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can ſpeak better or expreſs the Mind of the *holy Ghoſt* plainer, than the *holy Ghoſt?* The Scripture is the Great *Record* of *Truth*; That which all theſe *Parties* in *Controverſie* agree to be the *Declared Mind and Will of God*, and they Unanimouſly ſay, *It ought to be believ'd and profeſt as ſuch.* If this be true, in what *Language* can we ſo ſafely and properly declare our Belief of the Truths therein contain'd, or expreſs thoſe Truths, as in the very *Language* of the *Scripture*?

And I cannot ſee how thoſe Perſons can be excuſed in the *Day* of *God's Judgment*, who make men *Heterodox* or *Heretical* for refuſing to ſubſcribe their *Articles* of *Faith*, that are not in *Scripture-Terms*, who at the ſame time offer to declare their Belief of *God*, *Chriſt*, *Spirit*, *Man's Laps* or *Fall*, *Repentance*, *Sanctification*, *Juſtification*, *Salvation*, *Reſurrection* and *Eternal Recompence* in the *Language* of *Holy Scripture*? I muſt ſay, it is prepoſterous and a *Contradiction* that thoſe who deſire to deliver their *Faith* of *Truth* in the *Language* of *Truth*, ſhould not be reputed *True Believers* nor their *Faith* admitted. This were to ſay, that therefore their *Faith* is not to be received, becauſe it is declared in the Language of that very Truth, which is the *Object* of that *Faith*, for which it ought to be received, and which is on all hands concluded to be our *Duty to believe.* It ſeems then, we muſt not expreſs our *Belief* of God in his Words, but our own; nor is the *Scripture* a *Creed* plain or proper enough to declare a *True believer* or an *Orthodox Chriſtian*, without our Gloſſes.

Are not things, come to a *ſad paſs*, that to refuſe any other *Terms*, than thoſe the *Holy Ghoſt* has given us, and which are confeſt to be the *Rule* or *Form* of

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sound Words, is to expose a Man to the Censure of being *Unsound* in the *Faith* and unfit for *Christian-Communion*? Will nothing do but *Man's Comment* instead of *God's Text*? his Consequences and Conclusions in the room of *Sacred Revelation*? I cannot see how any Man can be obliged *to receive or believe revealed Truths in any other Language than that of the Revelation it self*, especially if those that vary the *Expression*, have not the same *Spirit* to lead them in doing so, or that it appears not to me that they have the *Guidance* of that *holy Spirit*. If the *holy Ghost* hath left *Doubts* in *Scripture*, which is yet irreverent to believe, I see not how *Men* can resolve them; it is the *Work* of that *Spirit*. And since Men are so apt to Err, *Doubts* are better left in *Scripture* than made or left by us. But it is to cross that Order of *Prudence* and *Wisdom* among Men, who chuse to Conform their *Expressions* to the things they believe. If an honest Man hath related a *Story* to me of something he hath seen, and I am to declare my *Faith* about it, if I believe the *Fact*, I will chuse to deliver it in the *Terms* of the *Relator*, as being nearest to the Truth.

Suppose a Father dying makes his *Last Will* and *Testament*, and, as he thinks, so plain, that there can be no Mistake made by the *Executors*, but what is wilful: If they instead of proving this *Will* and acting according to the plainness of it, turn *Commentators*, make more Difficulties than they find, and perplex the *whole Matter* to the Children and *Legatees*, and send them to the *Law* for their Right; will we not esteem such *Executors Ill Men*, and justifie those Persons concern'd in their *Refusal* of their *Paraphrase*?

Heb. 1. 1. *phraſe? God hath at ſundry times and in divers manners*, by his *Prophets*, his *Beloved Son and his Apoſtles* deliver'd to the World a *Declaration* of his bleſſed *Will*; but ſome have claim'd and taken to themſelves the *Keeping*, *Explanation* and *Uſe* of it, ſo as thoſe that chuſe to be concluded by the *Letter* and *Text* of *Chriſt's Teſtament* in its *moſt important Points*, expoſe themſelves to great prejudice for ſo doing; for they are excommunicated from all other ſhare in it, than the *puniſhment* of the *Breakers* of it, which is part of their *Anathema*, who, of all others, are moſt guilty of *Adding* or *Diminiſhing*, by undertaking to determin, for others as well as themſelves, the *Mind* and *Intention* of the *holy Ghoſt* in it.

But if it be true, as true it is, that few have writ of the Divine *Authority* of *Scripture*, who do not affirm that the very *Penmen* of it were not only *inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt*, but ſo *extraordinarily acted* by him, as that they were wholly aſleep to their own *Will*, *Deſires* or *Affections*, like people taken out of themſelves, and purely *Paſſive*, as *Clay* in the hand of the *Potter*, to the *Revelation*, *Will* and *Motion* of the *Spirit*; and for this End, that nothing deliver'd by them might have the *leaſt Poſſibility* of *Miſtake*, *Error* or *Imperfection*, but be a *Compleat Declaration* of the *Will* of *God* to men; I cannot ſee which way ſuch Men can excuſe themſelves from *Great Preſumption*, that will, notwithſtanding, have the Wording of *Creeds* of *Communion*; and reject that *Declaration* of *Faith* as *inſufficient* which is deliver'd in the very *Terms* of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and deny thoſe Perſons to be *Members* of *Chriſt's Church*, that in Conſcience refuſe

refuſe to ſubſcribe any other *Draught* than that their Lord has given them.

Two things oppoſe themſelves to this Practice: *Firſt*, The *Glory* of *God* and the *Honour* of the *Scripture*; in that it naturally drawspeople from the *Regard Due* to *God* and the *Scripture*, and begits too much *Reſpect* for *Men* and their *Traditions*. This was the *Difficulty* Chriſt met with and complained of in his time; they had ſet up ſo many *Rabbies* to learn them *Religion*, that the *Lord* of the *True Religion* could hardly find place amongſt them. And what did they do? *They taught for Doctrines the* **Traditions** *of* **Men**: They gave their own and their Predeceſſors *Apprehenſions*, *Conſtructions* and *Paraphraſes* upon Scripture for the *Mind* and *Will* of *God*, the *Rule* of the Peoples *Faith*. They were near at this paſs in the *Church* of *Corinth*, when they cryed out, *I am for* Paul, *I am for* Apollo, and *I am for* Cephas, though they had not the ſame Temptation.

And that which followed then, ever will follow in the like Caſe, and that is **Diſtraction**; which is the Contrary to the *Second* thing, that oppoſeth it ſelf to this *Practice*, and that is the *concord* of *Chriſtians*. For the ſake of *Peace* conſider it: *Lo here* and *Lo there* always followed; one of this mind, and another of that: *As many Sects as Great Men to make and Head them*. This was the Caſe of the *Jews*; and yet I do not hear, that they devoured one another about their *Opinions* and *Commentaries* upon Scripture: but the *Chriſtians* have done both; *Divided* and *Perſecuted* too. *Firſt*, they have *divided*, and that moſtly upon the ſcore of *Opinions* about *Religion*: They have not been contented with the Expreſſions of the *holy Ghoſt*; they liked their

own better. And when they were set up in the *room* of *Scripture*, and in the *name* of *Scripture*, SUBMISSION was required upon *pain* of *Worldly Punishments*: This dissatisfied *Curiosity*, this *Unwarrantable*, what shall I say? this *Wanton Search* has cost *Christendom* dear, and poor *England* of any part of it.

I design not to grate upon any, or to revive old *Stories*, or search old Wounds, or give the least Just Occasion of *Displeasure* to those that are in *Present Power*; yet I must needs say, that *Opinion* on one side or t'other has been the cause of much of that *Discord*, *Animosity* and *Confusion* that have troubled this Kingdom. And it seems to have been the *great Stratagem* of *Satan* to prevent the spreading of the *Glorious Gospel* of *Salvation* in the World, by taking men off from the serious pursuit of *Piety* and *Charity*, *Humility* and *holy Living*, *Peace* and *Concord*: And, under pretence of *more raised Apprehensions* and sublime Knowledge of *Religion*, to put them upon introducing *Curious* and *Doubtful Questions*, that have given occasion, first for *Contention*, and That, for *Persecution*. This was no more uncondemned, than unfore-seen of the Apostle *Paul* who exhorted his beloved Son *Timothy*, *To avoid those that doted about Questions*, those Men, that would be thought *Skilful*, *Inquisitive Searchers* after *Truth*, such as love to exercise their *Faculties* and improve their *Talents*; but let us hear his Judgment, *of which* (says he) *cometh* Strife, Railing, Surmises, perverse Disputings *of men of Corrupt Minds*. And the truth is, none else love such *Disputings*: They, who seek a daily *Victory* over the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*,

1 Tim. 6. 3, 4, 5.

Devil, and preſs fervently after *Fellowſhip* with *God*, and that Conſolation that enſues ſuch an Employment of their time, have very little to loſe upon *Contention* about *Words*. I could wiſh I were able to ſay, that *Vain Controverſie* were not our Caſe! But this is not all, the Apoſtle does expreſsly tell Timothy, that *if any man conſent not to* wholſom Words, *even the* Words *of our Lord* Jeſus Chriſt, *and the Doctrine, that is according to* **Godlineſs**, *he is Proud, knowing nothing, but doting about Queſtions*, &c. They were ſuch as uſed *Philoſophy* and *vain Deceit*, as he writes to the *Coloſſians*; *Beware*, ſays he, *leſt any man ſpoil you through Philoſophy and vain Deceit, that is*, draw them away from the *ſimplicity* of the *Goſpel* and the *wholſome Words* of Chriſt, *after the Traditions of men, after the Rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt*. He uſed no *humane Wiſdom*, yet he *ſpake Wiſdom*, but it was in a *Myſtery*, tho not to the humble Diſciples of *Jeſus*, nothing was plainer; but it was a *Myſtery* to the *Wiſe Men* of this *World*. And truly, they that are not unacquainted with the more degenerate Ages of the *Greek Philoſphers*, how *Philoſophy*, once taken for the Love of *Virtue* and *ſelf-Denial*, which they eſteem'd *trueſt Wiſdom*, and was begun by men of *Ordinary Rank*, but great Example of Life, became little elſe than an *Art* of *Rangling* upon a multitude of *Idle Queſtions*, and ſo they entertain'd the Apoſtle *Paul* at *Athens*, may very well gueſs which way Apoſtacy entred among *Chriſtians*; eſpecially, when we conſider that in the third and fourth *Centuries* the *Heathen-Philoſophers* had the *Education* of the *Chriſtian Youth*, and that no man had any Reputation among the *Chriſtian Doctors*, Col. 2. 8.

Doctors, who were not well *initiated* in the *Philoſophy*, *Rhetorick* and *Poetry* of the *Gentiles*. Which made for *Impurity* of *Language*, and laid a Foundation for great *Feuds* in the *Church*: Chriſt and his Doctrine muſt be prov'd by *Ariſtotle* and his *Philoſophy*. Yes, *Ariſtotle* muſt explain *Scripture*, and by Degrees *methodize* the *looſe Parts* of it, and reduce them to *Formal Propoſitions* and *Axiomes*; and by the Help of ſuch *Philoſophers* the *poor Fiſher-men* were taught to ſpeak *Metaphyſically*, and grew *Polite* in the Senſe of *Athens*, who, to ſay true, were neither guilty of *uſing* nor *underſtanding* it. But as the *firſt Rules* of *Philoſophy* were few and plain, and conſiſted in *Virtuous Living*, ſo the *Chriſtian Religion* was deliver'd with much Brevity, yet much *Plainneſs*; ſuited to the Capacity of the *Young*, the *Ignorant* and the *Poor*; to inform their Underſtandings, ſubdue their Affections and convert their Souls to God, as well as Perſons of more *Age*, *Knowledge* and *Ability*.

And truly, when we conſider the *ſmallneſs* of the *Writings* of the *Evangeliſts*, the *ſhortneſs* of *Chriſt's Sermons*, the *fewneſs* of the *Epiſtles* writ by the *Apoſtles*, and the *many* and *great Volumns* of *Commentators* and *Criticks* ſince, we may juſtly ſay the *Text* is *almoſt loſt* in the *Comment*, and *Truth hid* rather than *revealed* in thoſe heaps of *fallible Apprehenſions*. Where, by the way, let me ſay that the *Voluminouſneſs* of the Books is no ſmall token of the *unclearneſs* of the *Writers*; for the more *evident* and better digeſted any Matter is, the more *eaſie* and *ſhort* it will be in expreſſing. But after the Chriſtians had declin'd the *Simplicity* of their own *Religion*, and grew *curious* and *wanton*; *loving God above all*, Their *Neighbours as themſelves* and *keeping the plain Commandments*

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of Christ, that relate to *good Life*, became but *Ordinary* and *Homely things*: Their Easiness rendred them *contemptible*: They gave but little pleasure to *Speculative Minds*; they had nothing in them above *Ordinary Capacities*; and it seemed hard, that men of *inquisitive* and *rais'd Spirits* should sit down with the *Lesson* of **Rusticks** and **Peasants**: *Philosophers* did not do so; and they would be like other Nations. 'Twas not enough now to know *There was a God*, and that he was but *One*, *Just* and *Good*, the *Observor* of their *Actions* and the *Rewarder* of their *Deeds*, and that therefore they should serve him; But they must be distinctly inform'd of his *Nature* and all his *Attributes*, his *Purposes* and his *Decrees*, and the *suitableness* of them all to the *Line* and *Plumet* of their *Understandings*: So that *God was to be, what their* Conclusions *would allow him to be*; that yet *knew not themselves.* Nor did it satisfie that there was a *Christ*, that this *Christ* was the *Son* of *God*, that *God so loved* Mankind, as beholding them in a way of *Destruction*, he *sent his Son* to proclaim *pardon* upon true *Repentance*, and offer'd a *general Reconciliation* to as many as received and embrac'd his *Testimony*; and that to that End he *laid down his Life* a *Ransom*, *rise* and *ascended*, and gave his *good Spirit* to lead his Followers after his Example in the *Way* of *Truth* and *Holiness*; But they must *search into the* Secret *of this* Relation, *how and after what manner he is the* Son *of* God? *His* Nature, Power *and* Person *must be discuss'd*: They will be satisfied in this, before they can find in their Hearts to believe in him. Next, *Whether he be the* Cause *or the* Effect *of God's Love? What was that* Price *he paid, and* Ransom *he gave? and how he* died *for us? if* Properly *and strictly, or* Tropically

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and elegantly to ſatisfie the Juſtice *of* God? and *whether God could, or could not have* ſaved *man an* otherway? *If this* Mercy *were offer'd* to all, *or but* ſome? and *whether* Acceptance *and* Repentance *be with the* conſent *of the* Creature, *or by an* Irreſiſtible Grace? *What* Body *he Riſe and Aſcended with? and what Bodies we ſhall have in the* Reſurrection, *in* Nature, Stature *and* Proportion? Laſtly? *What this* Spirit *is, that comes from* Chriſt? *if it comes from* God *alſo? Whether it* be God, *or an* Inferior Miniſter? *How it Exiſts?* *If a* Perſon, *in what* Relation, Degree *or* Dignity *it ſtands to the* Father *and* Son? with abundance more of this *Unreaſonable Strain*, flowing from the curious *Ungovern'd* and *Reſtleſs minds* of men. No man would be uſed by his Servant, as they treat God: *He muſt* wait *our* Leaſure, *before we will* believe, receive *and* obey *him*: *His* Meſſage *is* obſcure, *we don't underſtand it*; *he muſt gratifie our* Curioſity; *we deſire to be* better ſatisfied *with it before we believe or deliver it*; *It comes not preſently up to* Men's Underſtandings; *'tis too* obſcurely expreſt; *we will* explain *it and deliver with more* caution, clearneſs *and* ſucceſs *then it is delivered to us.* Thus *God's Revelation* hath been *ſcan'd* and his *Precepts examin'd*, before *Licens'd* by his Creature: Man would be wiſer then God; more wary then the *holy Ghoſt*. *Our* Lord, it ſhould ſeem, *underſtood not what a kind Creature* Man *was*; *he wanted his* Wiſdom *to admoniſh him of the Danger*; *or* haply *he thought not upon that* Corruption, *which ſhould befall* Mankind *in theſe* Latter Ages *of the* World, *which might require the* Abilities *of* Men *to ſupply the* Wants *and* Defects *left by the* Holy Ghoſt *in the* Wording *of the* Scripture.—I wrong not this *Practice*, I render it not more *Odious* than it is: It is an *Inexcuſable piece*

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of *Presumption*; that which debases the *External Testimony* of God, and draws men off from that which is *Eternal* too. It introduces the *Traditions* of men in the Room of *God's Records*, and setteth up their *Judgment* and *Results* for the *Rule* of *Christian Faith* and *Canons* of *Christ's Church*. This is one of those Things, that made *Rome* so *hateful* and her *Yoke Intolerable* to our *Predecessors*: *Pretended Deductions from Scripture put in the Room of Scripture*, with a *Supersedeas* to all *Dissent* upon never so *Just* a *Ground* of *Dissatisfaction*.

I beseech you, **Protestants**, by the Mercies of God and Love of *Jesus* Christ, ratified to you in his *most-precious Blood*, FLY *ROME* AT HOME; Look to the *Enemies of* your *own House!* Have a care of this *Presumption*; carry it not too high; lay not *Stress*, where God has laid none, neither use his *Royal Stamp* to Authorize your *Apprehensions* in the Name of his *Institutions*.

I do not say, that men are never to *Express* their *Minds* upon any place of Scripture to *Edification*: There is a *Christian Liberty* not to be denyed; but never to lay down *Articles* of *Faith*, which ever ought to be in the *Very Language* of *Holy Writ* to avoid Temptation and Strife. You see, how the Contrary method hath been the great *Make-bate* in all Ages, and the *Imposition* of such *Opinion* the *Priviledge* of *Hypocrites*, but the *Snare* of many *honest Minds*; to be sure, the *sad Occasion* of *Feuds* and *miserable Divisions*. It was plainly seen, that by the many *Disputes* that rise from hence, Mens *Wits* were *confounded* with their matters, *Truth* was lost and *Brotherhood* destroyed. Thus the *Devil* acted the Part both of *Opponent* and *Defendant*, and managed

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the *Paſſions* of both *Parties* to his End, which was **Diſcord**. And but too many were ready to perſwade themſelves, from the *Miſcarriages* on both ſides, that *nothing certain could be concluded about* Religion; for it ſo fell out that whilſt men were prepetually wrangling and brawling about ſome one *Opinion* of *Religion*, the moſt *Important Points* of Faith and Life were little regarded, Unity *broken*, Amity *diſtroyed*, & thoſe Wounds made that were never cloſed but with the extinction of one Party: Not a Good *Samaritan* being to befound to heal and cloſe them. Now it was that a *Godly man* was diſtinguiſh'd from an *Ungodly* by this, let his *Life* have been almoſt what it would, that he ſeem'd *to maintain the* Opinions *in* Vogue, *and to abhor that* Doctrine, *which*, *in ſome* one *or* two Points, *might be reputed* Heretical, *or* Schiſmatical.

O that we could but ſee how many and how *great Defeats Satan* hath given to the *Work* of *God* in the hearts of men! what *Deſolations* he hath made by this one Evil, CONTROVERSIE; begot of *Opinion* and uſed for it; and how few have *Contended for the Faith*, *as it was once deliver'd to the Saints*! He muſt be a *Man* of *Braſs*, that could refrain from weeping at theſe *Calamities*. And truly I muſt deſire to take leave ſometimes to bewail this *broken Condition* of *Chriſtendom*, and to beſtow my *Tears* in ſecret upon theſe *Common Ruins*: And I beſeech God Almighty, with a *Soul ſenſibly touch't* with the *Miſchiefs* that naturally flow from this Practice, to *Awaken* you to a *moſt-Speedy* and *Serious Conſideration* of your *Preſent Standing* and **Amendment** of your Miſcarriage in this and all other points that may concern your *Good* and his *Glory*. Put away *Wrath!* away with *Clamors!* away with *Arrogance* and *Impatience!*

Let-

Let that *Holy Spirit* of *God*, which we in common profeſs to be the *Chriſtians Guide*, have the Ordering of our Underſtandings in *Spiritual things*, leſt *Ignorance* ſhould miſtake, *Intereſt* wreſt, or *Prejudice* pervert the *ſenſe* of *God's Book*. For as too many are *Ignorant* of the *Divine Truth* through their own *Concupiſcence* and *vile Affections*, that carry them away to the *Deſire* of other things, and therefore eaſily miſtake about *Nice* or *Obſcure Matters*; ſo there are not a few, who come to *ſearch* the *Scriptures* with *Pre-poſſeſs'd Minds*, that are ſorry to meet with a *Contradiction* to their own *Judgment* inſtead of being glad to find the *Truth*, and who uſe their Wits to *Rack out another Senſe* than that which is *genuine*; which ſort of men, uſe the *Scripture* for its *Authority*, and not its Senſe or Truth.

All this while the *Head* is ſet at work, not the *Heart*, & that which Chriſt moſt inſiſted upon, is leaſt concerned in this ſort of *Faith* and *Chriſtianity*; and that is, KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS. For 'tis *Opinion*, not Obedience, *Notion* and not Regeneration, that ſuch men purſue. This *Kind* of *Religion* leaveth them as bad as it finds them, and worſe; for they have ſomething more to be *proud* of. Here is a *Creed* indeed, but of what? the *Concluſions* of *men?* and what to do? to prove they *believe* in *Chriſt*; who, *it ſeems*, never made them. It had been happy for the World that there had been no other *Creeds*, than what he and his Apoſtles gave and left. And it is not the leaſt *Argument* againſt their being needful to *Chriſtian Communion*, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did not think ſo; who was not wanting to *declare the* WHOLE COUNSEL *of* GOD to the Church.

To

To Conclude, if you desire Peace, love Truth, seek Piety and hate Hypocrisie: Lay by all those things called *Articles* of *Faith* and *Canons* of the *Church*, that are not to be found in *Expres's Terms* in *Scripture*, or so plainly *Authorized* by *Scripture*, as may, with ease, be discerned by every Honest and Conscientious Person. And in the Room of those *Numerous* and *Disputed Opinions*, made the *Bond* of *External Communion*, let some *Plain*, *General* and *Necessary Truths* be laid down in *Scripture Terms*, and let them be few: which leads me to the *Next* point, and that is FAITH, which is generally mistaken in the very *Nature* of it.

Sect. 3. *Of Faith and Mistakes about it.*

THe *Second Mischief*, that is amongst us, is the *Misunderstanding* of the *Nature* of FAITH: Whence it comes to pass that men take that for *Faith*, which is not; and sit down in a *Security pernicious* to their *Eternal Happiness*. I shall briefly say something, of *What is not* Faith, before I speak of that, which appears to me to be *Truly* and *Scripturally such*.

The *Faith* of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is not only not believing *mens Opinions* and *Determinations* from the *Sacred Text*, of which I have so freely deliver'd my self, but it is *not meerly the Belief* even of the things contain'd in *Scripture* to be *True*: For this the *Devils* and *Hypocrites* do, and yet are very *Bad Believers*: They refuse not the *Authority* of *Scripture*: The *Devil* made Use of it to Christ himself; but he would have the *Explaining* and *Applying* of it: And since he could not hinder the *Divine Inspiration*, if he may but be

be allow'd the *Exposition*, he hopes to *secure* his *Kingdom*. Since then the *Verity* and *Authority* of both *History* and *Doctrine* may be believ'd by the *Devil* and *Hypocrites*, that are *false* to their own *Faith* and *Knowledge*, we cannot without great *Injustice* to the *Faith* of our Lord *Jesus* Christ, which is the *Faith* of all his Followers, allow *That a meer* Belief *of the* Verity *and* Authority *of the* History *and* Doctrine *of Scripture is that* true *and* precious Faith which was the Saints Victory over the World.

Faith then, in the *Sense* of the *holy Ghost*, is by the holy Ghost thus defined: viz. *The Evidence of things not seen and the Substance of things hoped for.* This is General and runs through all *Ages*; being received of all Sorts of Christians as a true definition of Faith: But with leave, I shall express it thus: *True* Faith *in God*; *is entirely believing and trusting in God, confiding in his Goodness, resigning up to his Will, obeying his Commands, and relying upon his Conduct and Mercies, respecting this Life and that which is to come.* For a man cannot be said to believe in God, that believes not what he says and requires: And no man can be said to do that, who does not obey it, and conform to it; for that is believeing in God, *to do as he says.* This is in Scripture called the *Gift* of *God*; and well it may, for it is *Supernatural*: It crosses the *Pride*, *Confidence* and *Lust* of man: It grows out of the *Seed* of *Love*, sown by God in the Heart, at least *it works by Love*: And this distinguishes it from the *Faith* of *Ill Men* and *Devils*, that though they do believe, they don't *Love God above all*, but something else instead of God, and are full of *Pride*, *Anger*, *Cruelty* and

Heb. 11. 1.

Eph. 2. 8

Gal. 5. 6.

and all manner of Wickedneſs. But this *Faith* that works by *Love*, that *Divine Love* which God plants in the Heart, it draws and inclines Man, and gives him *Power* to forſake all that diſpleaſeth God: And every ſuch *Believer* becomes an *Enoch*, *Tranſlated*, that is, *Changed* from the *Faſhion* of this *World*, the *Earthly* Image, the *Corrupt* Nature; and is renewed in the *Likeneſs* of the Son of God, and *walks with God*. *The Juſt ſhall live by* Faith: They have in all Ages liv'd by this *Faith*; that is, been *ſuſtain'd*, *ſupported*, *preſerved*: The Devil within nor the World without could never conquer them. They walked not by *Sight*, but by *Faith*, and had regard to the *Eternal Recompenſe*: No *Viſible things* prevailed with them to depart from the *Inviſible God*, to quench their Love or ſlacken their Obedience to him; the Great *Teſtimony* of their *Faith* in him.

Heb. 2. 4.

This *Holy Faith* excludes no Age of the World; The *Juſt Men*, the *Cornelius*'s in every Generation have had *ſome degree* of it: It was more eſpecially the *Faith* of the *ſimpler Ages* of the World, ſuch as thoſe in which the *Patriarchs* lived, who having not an *outward Law*, became a *Law to ſelves*, *and did the things contained in the Law*; for they believed in God, and, through Faith, *obtained a good Report*. But becauſe that it hath pleaſed God, in Order to *Man's Recovery* from that grievous Laps Diſobedience hath caſt him into, *at ſundry times and in divers manners* to appear to the Sons of men, *firſt* by his *Prophets*, and *laſt* of all by his *Son*; and that theſe ſeveral *Manifeſtations* have had ſomething peculiar to them, and very remarkable in them

Rom. 2. 14.

Heb. 11. 39.

Heb. 1. 1.

them, ſo that they claim a place in our *Creed*; It will not be amiſs, that we briefly conſider them.

The *firſt* was that of the *Prophets*, in which *Moſes* preceded, by whom the *Law* came to the *Jews*, but *Grace* and *Truth* to mankind by *Jeſus Chriſt*. The *firſt* brought *Condemnation*, the laſt *Salvation*, the one *Judgment*, the other *Mercy*; which was *glad Tidings* indeed. The one did fore-run the other, as in *Order* of Time, ſo in *Nature* of Diſpenſation: The *Law* was the *Goſpel begun*, the *Goſpel* was the *Law fulfilled or finiſht*: They cannot be parted. Joh. 1. 17.

The *Decalogue* or *Ten Commandments* were little more than what had been known and practiſed before; for it ſeem'd but an *Epitome* and *Tranſcript* of the *Law writ in Man's heart* by the Finger of God: This is confeſt on all hands and in all Ages ſince, as the writings of ancient *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* and *Chriſtians* tell us. This therefore muſt needs be a *Part* of our *Creed*; for it relates to that *Righteouſneſs* which is *Indiſpenſible* and *Immutable*: The other *part* of their *Conſtitution* that was *peculiar* to their *Politick*, *Typical* and *Mutable State*, the *Goſpel* is either Unconcerned in it, or elſe ended it by the *bringing in of a better hope and a more Enduring Subſtance*. *But* Grace *and* Truth *came by* Jeſus *Chriſt*: *Grace* is oppoſed to the Condemnation of the *Law*, and *Truth* to *Shadows*. This is the *moſt-Excellent Diſpenſation*; it is ours, and it becomes us to weigh well our *Intereſt* in it. Take it in other words of the Holy Ghoſt. *God, who at ſundry times and in divers manners ſpoke in times paſt unto the* Fathers *by the* Prophets, *hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken to us by his* Son. *God ſo loved the World, that* (after all the World's Provocations by *Omiſſions* and Heb. 1. 1. John 3. 16. 17.

Commiſſions) *he gave his Only Begotten* Son *into the World, that the World through him might be ſaved.*

And here *Two Things* preſent themſelves to our Conſideration: *Firſt*, the *Perſon*, who he was? what his *Authority*? *Secondly*, his *Meſſage*, his Doctrine, what he taught? which though never ſo *reaſonable* in it ſelf, depended very much, in its *Entertainment* among the People, upon the *Truth* of his *Miſſion* and *Authority*, that he was no *Impoſtor*, but came from God, and was the *Promiſed Meſſiah*. This was done two Ways; by *Revelation* and by *Miracles*. By *Revelation*, to ſuch as were as well prepared and inclined, as honeſt *Peter*, the *Woman* of *Samaria*, and thoſe that were mov'd to believe him from the *Authority* in which he ſpake, ſo *Unlike* that of the *Formal Scribes*. By *Miracles*, to thoſe that being blinded by *Ignorance* or *Prejudice*, needed to have their ſenſes ſtruck with ſuch *Supernatural Evidences*, from many of whom this *Witneſs* came, *that he was the* MESSIAH, *the* Chriſt *and* SON *of* GOD.

In fine, all was done within the Compaſs of that People, among whom he daily converſed, that was needful to prove he was from God and had *God's Meſſage* to declare to the World. In ſo much that when ſome of his Diſciples were not ſo firm in their Belief of his *Authority*, as he deſerved at their hands, he calls his own *Works* to prove his *Commiſſion* and convict them of *Incredulity*: *If ye will not believe, that the* Father *is in me, that he doth theſe* Works *by me*; *believe me for the very* Works *ſake*, Thus he argued with the *Jews*: *Say ye of him the* Father *hath ſanctified and ſent into the World, thou Blaſphemeſt, becauſe I ſaid, I am the* Son *of* God? *if I do not the* Works *of my*

John 14. 10, 11. John 10. 36, 37, 38.

my Father, *believe me not* (this is reaſonable; he that ſhall *Judge* the World, offers to be *Tryed* himſelf; he goes on) *But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the* Works, *that ye may know and believe, that the* Father *is in me.* And he laid the *Sin* of the *Jews* upon this Foot, *viz.* John 15. 24. That they *rejected* him, after he had *made proof* of his *Divine Miſſion* by ſuch Extraordinary *Works, As no men among them all could do*: which, to give them their Due, they do not deny, but ſhamefully pervert and fooliſhly abuſe by attributing them to the *Power* of the *Devil.* To which *Malice* and *Slander* he returned this Inconfutable Anſwer; *A Kingdom divided againſt it ſelf, cannot ſtand:* What! *caſt out* Devils *by the Prince of* Devils? 'tis a *Contradition*, and very *Madneſs* it ſelf.

I have nothing to do now with *Atheiſts*, or thoſe that call themſelves *Theiſts*; but ſuch as own themſelves *Chriſtians*; and ſhall therefore keep to my *Task*, namely; *What of the* Chriſtian Diſpenſation *is ſo Peculiar and Important, as to challenge of Right the Name of* Creed or Faith? I ſay then, *That the Belief of* Jeſus *of* Nazareth *to be the* Promis'd Meſſiah, *the* Son *and* Chriſt *of* God, come and ſent from God to reſtore and ſave Mankind, is the *firſt* and was then the *Only requiſite Article* of *Faith*, without any Large *Confeſſions*, or an Heap of *Principles* or *Opinions* reſolv'd upon after *Curious* and *Tedious Debates* by *Councils* or *Synods*: And this may be proved both by *Example* and *Doctrine.*

It is evident from *Example*, as in the Caſe of *Peter*, who for having believed in his heart and confeſt with his Mouth, *That* JESUS *was the* Chriſt *and* SON *of* GOD, obtained that *Signal Bleſſing*, Mat. 16.

This made *Nathaniel* a *Diſciple*; *Rabbi*, ſaid he, *thou art the* Son *of* God, *thou art the King of* Iſrael. It was the like *Confeſſion*, that made amends for *Thomas's Incredulity*, when he was ſenſibly aſſured of the *Reſurrection* of *Jeſus*, *My Lord and my God!* This was alſo the Subſtance of *Martha's Confeſſion* of *Faith* to *Jeſus*, when he ſaid to her, *I am the Reſurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me ſhall never dye: believeſt thou this?* She anſwered, *Yea Lord, I believe, that thou art the* Chriſt *the* Son *of* God, *which ſhould come into the World?* She anſwered him not as to that Particular of the *Reſurrection*, but in General, *that he was the* Chriſt, *the* MESSIAH, *that was to come into the World*, and that ſufficed. 'Twas a *Confeſſion* not unlike to this, that the *Blind Man* made, to whom Chriſt gave *Sight*, when *Jeſus* ſaid to him, *Doſt thou believe on the* Son *of* God? *Lord*, ſaid he, *I do believe? and he worſhipped him.* What ſhall we ſay of the *Centurion*, preferred by Chriſt himſelf before any in *Iſrael*, though a *Gentile?* Or of the *Faith* of the *Woman* and *Inhabitants* of *Samaria*, *that he was the* Maſſiah? or of that *Importunate Woman* that cryed to *Jeſus*, *To caſt a* Devil *out of her poſſeſt Daughter*, and would not be put off, to whom Chriſt ſaid; *O Woman, great is thy* Faith, *be it unto thee even as thou wilt*! To which let me add the *Faith* of the People, that brought the *Man Sick of the Palſy* to Chriſt, who *uncover'd the Roof to let him down to be toucht*, the *Faith* of *Jairus* the Ruler; and of that *Good Woman*, who *preſſed through the Croud to touch the* Hem

Mat. 16. 16, 17. John 1. 49.

John 9. 35,38.

Mat. 8. 10. John 4. Matth. 15. 23.—28.

Mark 2. 4. 5. Ch. 5. 22.

Matth. 9. 20, 21, 22, 27.

Hem of Christ's Garment, to whom *Jesus* said, *Be of good Comfort*, Daughter, *thy* Faith *has made Thee whole*: Also the *Two Blind-Men*, that followed him out of the *Rulers House*, crying, *Thou* Son *of* David, *have Mercy on us*: who, when *Jesus* had said, *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* Answered, YEA, LORD; upon which he touch'd their Eyes and said, *According to your* Faith *be it unto you*: Also the *Blind Man* near *Jericho*; The *Leprous Samaritan* that Christ cleansed; and that Notable Passage of the *Woman* that *kissed his Feet* and *anointed his Head*, to whom he pronounced this Happy Sentence; *Thy* Faith *hath saved thee, go in Peace.*

Luke 18.35,42. Chap. 17.15, --- 19. Chap. 7. 45, --- 50.

I will conclude this with that Famous Instance of the *Thief* upon the *Cross*, who neither knew nor had time to make a *Large Confession* like the *Creeds* of these dayes: but it seems he said enough; Lord, *remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.* And *Jesus* said unto him; *Verily, I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* By which it is easie to learn that 'twas the *Heart* not the Mouth, the *Sincerity*, not the Words that made the *Confession Valid.*

Luke 23. 42, 43.

Nor was this only, in the Days of *Christ*, the Effect of his *Gracious Dispensation* or peculiar Indulgence, for *After-times* afford us the like Instances. This was the main Bent of *Peter's Sermon*; and when the *Three thousand believed that he whom the* Jews *had crucified, was both* Lord *and* Christ, *and repented of their Sins, and gladly received his Word*, they are said to have been in a *State* of *Salvation.* Thus *Cornelius* and his Household and Kindred, so soon as *Peter* declared

Acts 2. 37, --- 47. Acts 10. 24, --- 48.

Acts 8. 27, — 37. clared *Jesus to be the Messiah*, and that they had believed, the *Holy Ghost fell upon them*; and they were received into the *Christian Communion*. But the Story of the *Eunuch* is very pat to our purpose: As he rid in his Charriot, he was reading these words out of the Prophet *Isaiah*, viz. *That he was led as a Sheep to the Slaughter, and like a Lamb dumb before the Shearers, so opened he not his Mouth. In his Humiliation his Judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his Generation? for his Life is taken from the Earth.* *Philip* joyn'd to him and askt him, *If he understood what he read?* he desired *Philip* to interpret the mind of the Prophet, if he spoke of himself or another? *Philip* upon the place preached to him *Jesus*: The *Eunuch* was so well perswaded by the Apostle, that coming to a Water, he said, *What doth hinder me to be Baptized?* *Philip* answered him; *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou may'st*: To this the *Eunuch* replyed; *I believe, that* Jesus *Christ is the* Son *of* God. Upon which he was *Baptized:* and 'tis said, *He went away rejoycing*: which indeed he might well do, that felt the Comfort of his *Faith*, the *Remission* of his *Sin* and the *Joys* of the *Holy Ghost*, which always follow true faith in Christ.

I will conclude these Examples with a Passage in the *Acts* of *Paul* at *Thessalonica*; 'tis this: Acts 17. 2, 3, 4. Paul, *as his manner was, went in unto them, and* Three Sabbath-dayes *reasoned with them out of the Scriptures; opening and alledging that* Christ *must needs have* suffered *and* risen *again from the* dead; *and that this* Jesus (said he) *whom I preach unto you, is* Christ. *And some of them believed and consorted with* Paul *and* Silas: *and of the devout* Greeks *a great multi-*

tud,

titude, and of the Chief Women *not a few.* Thus we may plainly ſee, that they were *Baptiz'd* into the *Faith* of *Jeſus*, and not into *Numerous Opinions*; and that this one *Confeſſion*, from true Faith in the heart, was the ground and Principle of their *Church-fellowſhip.* Then *God's Church* was at Peace; ſhe thrive; there were then no *Snares* of Words made to catch Men of Conſcience with. Then not many *Words*, but much *Integrity*; now *much Talk, and little Truth: Many Articles*, but *O ye of little Faith!*

Nor was this only the Judgment and Practice of that Time out of *Condeſcenſion* to *Weakneſs*, and *Charity* to *Ignorance*; for both Chriſt *Jeſus* himſelf and his Apoſtles (thoſe bleſſed *Meſſengers* of holy *Truth*) have doctrinally laid it down, as the *great Teſt* to *Chriſtians*; that which ſhould diſtinguiſh them from *Infidels*, and juſtly entitle them to his *Diſcipleſhip* and *Chriſtian Communion* one with another. Let us read a little further: *Then ſaid they to* Jeſus, *what ſhall we do, that we might work the* Works *of* God? Jeſus *anſwered and ſaid to them*; *This is the* Work *of* God, *that ye* BELIEVE ON HIM, *whom God hath ſent. Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, he that* believeth *on me, hath Everlaſting Life.* John 6. 28, 29. --- 47. And upon another Occaſion to the *Jews* he ſaid: *For if ye* believe *not, that* I *am* HE, *ye ſhall die in your Sins.* Ch. 8. 24. It muſt follow then, that if they did believe him to be the Maſſiah, *the* Anointed of God to Salvation, *they ſhould be ſaved.* Acts 16. 30. 31. Moſt plain is that Anſwer of the Apoſtle to the *Goaler*, when he came trembling to them and ſaid, *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* Ro. 10. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. *Believe* (ſaid they)

they) *on the* Lord Jesus Christ, *and thou shalt be saved.* The Apostle *Paul* confirms this in his Epistle to the *Romans*, when he says: *If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the* Lord Jesus, *and shalt believe in thine* heart, *that God hath raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the* heart *man believeth unto Righteousness, and with the mouth Confession is made unto Salvation:* For *the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the* Jew *and the* Greek; *for the same* Lord *over all is rich unto all, that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the* Name *of the* Lord, *shall be saved.* This was the *Word* of *Faith* which they preached; and he testified, that it was *nigh in the heart*, as *Moses* had done before him. And saith the Apostle *John* on this Occasion, *Who is a Lyar, but he that denieth, that* Jesus *is the Christ? — Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth* (or every one that in Heart or Spirit confesseth) *that* Jesus *Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God.* Again says he, *Whosoever shall confess, that* Jesus *is the* Son *of* God, *God dwelleth in him, and he in God:* Yet once more he affirms, *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* But this is more then an *Historical* belief, a true Sound and hearty Perswasion: a Faith that influenced the whole man into a Sutable conformity to the nature, Example and Doctrine of the object of that Faith.

Deut. 30. 14.

1 John 2. 22.

Chap. 4. 2, — 15.

Chap. 5. 1.

I will conclude these Doctrinal Testimonies out of Scripture, with a Concluſive passage the *Apostle John* useth towards the end of his Evangelical History of *Jesus* Christ: *And many*

John 20. 30. 31.

many other Signs truly *did* Jeſus *in the Preſence of his Diſciples, which are not written in this Book; but theſe are written that ye might believe that* Jeſus *is the* Chriſt, *the* Son *of* God, *and that believing ye might have Life in his Name.* In which place *Two* things are remarkable; *Firſt*, That whatever things are written of Jeſus, are written to this end, *that we might believe that* Jeſus *is the* Chriſt. Secondly, *That thoſe that ſincerely believe, ſhall through him obtain Eternal Life.* Certainly then, if this be true, their *Incharity* and *Perſumption* muſt be great who have taken other meaſures, and ſet another *Rule* of *Chriſtianity*, than *Jeſus* and his Apoſtles gave. This *ſincere Confeſſion* contented Chriſt and his Apoſtles; but it will not ſatisfy thoſe that yet pretend to believe them: It was enough then for a *Miracle* and *Salvation* too, but it goes for little or nothing now. A man may ſincerely believe this and be ſtigmatiz'd for a *Schiſmatick*, and *Heretick*, an *Excommunicate*: but I may ſay, as Chriſt did to the *Jews* in another Caſe, *From the Beginning it was not ſo.*

But here I expect to be aſſaulted with this objection. *If this be all that is neceſſary to be believed to* Salvation *of what uſe is the reſt of* Scripture?

I Anſwer, Of *great uſe*, as the Apoſtle himſelf teacheth us; *All* Scripture *is given by Inſpiration of God, and is profitable for* Doctrine, *for* Reproof, *for* Correction, *for* Inſtruction *in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be prefect, throughly furniſht unto all good Works.* It concerns the whole *Life* and *Converſation* of a Man; but every paſſage in it is not therefore fit to be ſuch an *Article* of *Faith*, as upon which *Chriſtian Communion* ought or ought not to be maintained. For though it be 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

all

all *equally True*, it is not all *equally Important*: There is a great Difference between the *Truth* and *Weight* of a thing. For Example; It is as *True* that Christ suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, as that he suffered; and that he was pierced, as that he died; and that he did eat after his Resurrection, as that he rise from the Dead at all; but no Person of common Understanding will conclude an *Equal Weight* or Concernment in these things, because they are *Equally True*: The *Death* of Christ was of much greater Value then the Manner of it; his *Resurrection*, than any Circumstance of his Appearance after he was risen. The Question is not whether all the *Truths* contain'd in *Scripture* are not to be believed; but Whether those *Truths* are *Equally Important?* And whether the *Belief with the* heart *and Confession with the mouth, that* Jesus *is the* Christ *and* Son *of* God, *be not as sufficient now to entitle a man to Communion here and Salvation hereafter, as in those times?* against which nothing can be of Weight objected.

If it be said, that this *Contradicts the Judgment and Practice of many great and good Men.*

I Answer; I can't help that. If they have been tempted, out of their own *Curiosity* or the *Corruption of Times*, to depart from the *Ancient Paths*, the Foot-steps of purest Antiquity and best Examples, let their Pretences have been what they will. It was *Presumption:* And it was Just with God, that *Error* and *Confusion* should be the Consequence of those Adventures; nor has it ever fail'd to follow them.

Lastly

Lastly, if it be alledg'd, *That this will take in all* Parties, *yea, that* Schismaticks *and* Hereticks *will creep in under this General Confession, since few of them will refuse to make it.*

I do say, 'Twould be an *Happy Day.* What Man, loves God and Christ, seeks *Peace* and *Concord*, that would not rejoice if all our Animosities and Vexations about Matters of *Religion* were buried in this one Confession of *Jesus*, the great *Author* and *Lord* of the *Christian Religion*, so often lost in pretending to contest for it? View the *Parties* on Foot in Christendom among those called *Protestants*, observe their Differences well, and how they are generally maintain'd, and you will tell me that they are rent and divided about their own *Comments*, *Consequences* and *Conclusions*: Not the *Text*, but the *Meaning*; and that too, which perhaps is not in it self *Essential* to *Salvation*, as the *Dispute* betwixt the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists*, the *Arminians* and *Predestinarians*, and the like. Is it not lamentable to think that those who pretend to be *Christians*, and *Reformed* ones also, should divide with the Winds and fight, as *pro Aris & Focis*, for such things, as either are not *Expresly* to be found in *Scripture*, or if there, yet never appointed or intended by Christ or his Apostles for *Articles* of *Communion*. Should they then erect their *Communion* on another Bottom, or break it for deviating from any other Doctrines than what they in so many words have deliver'd to us for necessary?

If we consider the Matter well, I fear it will be found that the Occasion of *Disturbance* in the *Church* of

of *Christ* hath in most Ages been found to lie on the side of those who have had the *Greatest Sway* in it. Very pertinent to our present Purpose is that Passage of *J. Hales* of *Eaton* in his *Tract* concerning *Schism*: "It hath, saith he, "been the *Common Disease* of *Christians* from the Beginning, not to "content themselves with that "*Measure* of *Faith*, which *God* and "*Scriptures* have expressly afforded us; but out of a "*Vain Desire* to know more than is *Revealed*, they "have attempted to Discuss Things, of which "we can have no *Light* neither from *Reason* nor *Revelation*. Neither have they rested here, but upon "pretence of *Church-Authority*, which is NONE, "or *Tradition*, which for the most part is but FIGMENT, they have peremptorily concluded and "confidently imposed upon others a *Necessity* of Entertaining *Conclusions* of that Nature; and to "strengthen themselves have broken out into *Divisions* and *Factions*, opposing *Man* to *Man*, *Synod* to "*Synod*, till the *Peace* of the *Church* vanished without all Possibility of Recall. Hence arose those Ancient and many Separations amongst *Christians*, "*Arianism*, *Eutychianism*, *Nestorianism*, *Photinianism*, "*Sabellianism*, and many more both Antient and in "our Time,

Tract of *Schism*, (printed with other things) pag. 212, 213.

And as he hath told us one great *Occasion* of the *Disease*, so he offers what follows for the *Cure*:

p. 215, 216, 217, 218.

"And were *Liturgies* (sayes he) and *Publick* "*Forms* of *Service* so framed, as that they "admitted not of *particular* and *private* "*Fancies*, but contained only such things, "as in which all Christians do agree,

Schisms

"*Schiſms* on *Opinion* were utterly vaniſhed: Where-
"as to load our *Publick Forms* with the *Private*
"*Fancies* upon which we differ, is the moſt-ſove-
"raign Way to perpetuate *Schiſm* unto the World's
"End. —— Remove from them, whatſoever is ſcan-
"dalous to any *Party*, and leave nothing, but what
"all agree on; and the Event ſhall be that the *Pub-*
"*lick Service* and *Honor* of *God* ſhall no wayes ſuffer.
"For to charge *Churches* and *Liturgies* with
"Things Unneceſſary, was the Firſt Beginning of
"all *Superſtition*. —— If the ſpiritual Guides and
"*Fathers* of the *Church* would be a little ſparing of
"Incumbring Churches with *Superfluities*, and not
"*over-rigid* either in reviving *Obſolete Cuſtoms*, or
"impoſing *New*, *there were far leſs Danger of Schiſm*
"*or Superſtition* —— Mean while whereſoever *falſe*
"or *ſuſpected Opinions* are made a piece of the *Church*
"*Liturgy*, *he that ſeparates is not a Schiſmatick*: For
"it is a like Unlawful to make Profeſſion of known
"or ſuſpected Falſhoods, as to put in Practice Un-
"lawful or Suſpected Actions. He further tells us
in his *Sermon* of Dealing with *Erring Chriſtians*,
"That it is the Unity of the Spirit in the
"Bond of Peace, and not the Identity
"(or Oneneſs) of Conceit which the
"Holy Ghoſt requires at the Hands of
"*Chriſtians* ——" A better Way my Con-
"ceit cannot reach unto, then that we ſhould be wil-
"ling to think, that theſe things, which with ſome
"Shew of Probability we *deduce* from *Scripture*, are
"at the beſt but *Our Opinions*. For this peremptory
"Manner of ſetting down our *Concluſions* under this
"High Commanding Form of *Neceſſary Truths*, is
"generally one of the greateſt Cauſes, which keeps
the

J. Hales, *Golden Remains*, p. 49, 50.

"the Churches this Day so far asunder; when as a "*Gracious Receiving* of each other by Mutual Forbear- "ance, in this kind, might peradventure, in time, bring "them nearer together.

Thus much of this Great Man concerning *Schism*, the *Cause* and *Cure* of it: And for the Notion of *Hereticks* he will help us altogether as well: For though they are generally taken for such as err in Judgment about Doctrines and Articles of Faith, yet if this Man may have any Credit, and perhaps none of his Profession has deserv'd more, he tells us, that "Heresie is an Act of the Will, not of Reason, "and is indeed a Lye, not a Mistake: else (says he) "how could that known Speech of *Austin* go for "true, *Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo*: I may err, "but I am unwilling to be an Heretick. And in- deed this is no other than what Holy Scripture teacheth; *A Man that is an* Heretick, *after the first and second Admonition, reject*; *knowing, that he that is such, is subverted and sinneth*; *be- ing* **Condemned of himself.** Which is as much as to say, that no body is an *Heretick*, but he that gives the Lye to his own Conscience and is *Self-condemned*: Which is not the Case of men meerly Mistaken, or who only err in Judgment. And therefore the Term of *Hereticks* is as Untruly as Uncharitably flung upon those that Conscientiously dissent, either in point of *Discipline* or *Doctrine*, from any Society of Christians; and it is not hard to ob- serve that those who have most merited that Cha- racter, have most liberally bestow'd it.

Tit. 3. 10. 11.

But to shew you that neither true *Schismatick*, who is *One that unnecessarily and unwarrantably sepa- rates from that part of the* Visible Church *of which he*

was o'ce a Member, nor true *Heretick*, who is a *Wilful Subverter of True or an Introducer of false Doctrines, a Self-condemned Person*, can ever shelter himself under this *Common Confession* of *Christianity*, sincerely made, Let us consider, that who-ever so declares *Jesus* to be the *Messiah* and *Anointed Saviour* of God to Men, must be supposed to believe *all that of him, with respect to which he is so called.* Now that for which he is so denominated, is that which God sent him to do: The Reason and End of his coming he could best tell, who hath told us thus; *I am come, that ye may have Life, and that ye may have it more abundantly.* The World was dead in Trespasses and Sins, the guilt and defilement of Transgression had kill'd the Soul as to *Spiritual Life* and *Motion*; and from under this powerful Death he came to redeem the Soul unto *Life:* In short, to restore Man from that Fearful Degeneracy his Disobedience to God had reduced him unto.

The Way he took to accomplish this Blessed Work was *First*, To preach *Repentance* and the Approach of the *Kingdom* of *God*, which is his *Rule* and Authority in the Hearts of men, and that brings us to the *Second thing* to be believed, namely. ——

What he Taught?

1. First, his Doctrine led Men to *Rpentance*: *Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.* No Man could receive the *Kingdom* of *God*, whilst he lived under the Kingdom and Power of *Satan:* so that to *Repent* is not only to *bring* their *Deeds to the Light*, which Christ exhorteth Men to; but to *forsake* that upon Examination, which appeares to be *Evil.* Wherefore I conclude, that such as have not been acquainted

Mark 1. 14. John 3. 20. 21.

quainted with this *Holy Repentance*, do not ſincerely *believe*, neither can Rightly *confeſs Jeſus* to be the *Chriſt* the *Son* of *God*, the Saviour of the World. Therefore ſaith the Apoſtle, *Let him that nameth the* Name *of the* Lord, *depart from Iniquity*; plainly implying that thoſe do rather *Prophane* than Confeſs the *Name* of the *Lord*, who do not *Depart from* their *Iniquities*. And, ſaith the Apoſtle in another place, *No man can call* Jeſus **Lord**, *but by the* Holy Ghoſt: Which opens to us the Nature of the *True Confeſſion* we ought to make, and which, being truly made in a Scripture ſences makes us Chriſtians in a right Chriſtian acception; to wit, *That the* True Confeſſion *of* Jeſus *to be both* Lord *and* Chriſt, *is from ſuch a Belief in the Heart as is accompani'd with the embracing and practiſing of his Holy Doctrine: ſuch a Faith is the Work of the* Holy Ghoſt, and thoſe that do not ſo Confeſs him or call upon him, that is, by Virtue of the Overſhadowings of this *Divine Spirit* and *Power*, are not truly Chriſtians, true Worſhippers, or Believers and Diſciples of our Lord Jeſus.

Furthermore, they that receive *Chriſt* receive his *Kingdom*, his *Power* and *Authority* in their Souls; whereby the *ſtrong Man* that kept the houſe becomes *bound* and his *Goods ſpoil'd* by this *ſtronger Man*, the **Lord's Chriſt**; who is come from Heaven to dwell in us and be the *Hope* of our *Glory*; for ſo he was preached to the *Gentiles*. This *Kingdom*, the Apoſtle tells us, ſtands in *Righteouſneſs*, *Peace* and *Joy* in the *Holy Ghoſt*; and Chriſt tells us, where it is to be ſet up? *The* Kingdom *of* God *is within you*, ſaith the King himſelf; and where ſhould the *King* be, but in his own *Kingdom*? they are bleſſed that feel him to *Rule* and that live under

Luk 17. 20, 21.

under the ſwaying of his *Righteous Septer*: for when this *Righteous One Rules the Earth*, the *Sons* of *Men rejoyce*.

So that no Man can truly Confeſs and rightly Believe Jeſus to be the Chriſt and Son of God, who does not receive him to be his *King* to *rule* his Heart and Affections. For can a Man be ſaid to *believe* in one that he will not receive? but *To as many as received* Chriſt of Old, *gave he Power to become the* Sons *of* God; *which were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* What is this *Will* of *God*; *Paul* anſwers the Queſtion: *The* Will *of* God *is your Sanctification*; for this Chriſt came into the World. So that thoſe that believe and receive Chriſt, he is made to them *Righteouſneſs, Sanctification* and *Redemption*; that is, he has ſaved them from their Sins, both Guilt and Defilement, and ſanctified them from their Corruptions: They live now by the *Grace* of *God*, that teaches them to be of a *Sober, Righteous, Godlike Life*. *Ye ſhall know them by their Fruits*, ſaith Chriſt of the *Phariſees*; ſo ſhall Men know them, that ſincerely *believe* and *confeſs Chriſt* by their ſanctified Manners and *Blameleſs Converſations*. And *Wo* from the true and Juſt God to them that make other Diſtinctions! for God has made no other; there will be but *Goats* and *Sheep* at the *Laſt Day*; *Holy* and *Unholy*; *Juſt* and *Unjuſt*. Therefore let that be our Diſtinction, which ever was and will be God's Diſtinction; for all other Meaſures are the Effects of the *Paſſions* and *Preſumptions* of Men. But becauſe it may be expected, that I ſhould fix upon ſome few *General Heads* of Chriſtian Doctrine from the Mouth

John 1. 12. 13.

1 Cor. 1. 30.

of Christ and his Apostles, as requisite to *Christian Communion*, I shall proceed to mention what Christ eminently taught.

He that reads his Sermon upon the Mount will find in the Entrance, how many States and Conditions Christ *Blessed*; The *Poor* in *Spirit*, The *Mourners*, The *Meek*, They that *hunger after Righteousness*; The *Merciful*, The *Pure in Heart*, and the *Peace-makers*; which indeed Comprehend the whole of Christianity.

Mat. 5.

By *Mourners* we understand true Penitents, Men of *Unfeigned Repentance*; which leads them not only to Confess but Forsake their Sins. This *Godly Sorrow* Strips Men of all false rests and comforts, makes them *Poor* in *Spirit*, *Empty* of themselves, wanting the comfort of the *Light*, *Life* and *Power* of *Jesus* to support and sustain them; yet as they stedfastly walk in that measure they have, the *Attonement* of the Blood is felt, and it cleanseth them from all Unrighteousness, which makes them *Pure* in *Heart*. And in this Condition no Food will serve their Turn but *Righteousness*; after this they *Hunger* and *Thirst* more than for the Bread that preisheth. They are full of *Meekness* and *Mercy*, *Making Peace* and Promoting Concord where-ever they come: For being themselves reconciled to God, they endeavour to reconcile all Men unto God and one unto another: Submiting all Worldly considerations to this incomparable peace, that passeth all human understanding.

1 John 1. 7.

In short, let us bring it home to our Consciences and deal faithfully with our selves. Do we know this Holy *Mourning*? this *Godly Sorrow*? Are we *Poor* in *Spirit* indeed? Not Self-conceited but *Humble*, *Meek* and *Lowly* in Heart,

1 Cor. 2. 3.

Heart, like him that bid us do so? De we *Hunger* after the *Kingdom* of *God* and *Righteousaess* of it? And are our *Hearts purified* by the Precious Faith of the *Son* of *God* that is a working, cleansing and conquering Faith? *In fine*, Are we *Merciful*? *Tender Hearted*? Lovers of *Peace* more than lovers of our selves? *Persecuted* rather than Persecutors? such as receive *Stripes* for Christ's sake, and not those that *beat our Fellow-Servants*? No Man has true *Faith* in Christ *Jesus*, that is not acquainted with these Blessed Qualifications: This is Christ's Doctrine; and to *believe* in him is to *obey* it and be *like* him.

The great Intendment of this Sermon is to press people to a *more Excellent Righteousness* then that of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*. *For*, saith *Jesus* to the Multitude, *Except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the* Scribes *and* Pharisees, *ye shall in no Case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Vers. 20. 22.

(1.) He taught, not only that *Killing*, but **Anger** without a very Just Cause, is Unlawful to his Disciples, his Followers. Vers. 20.

(2.) He prefers **Concord** above *Devotion*, *Mercy* before Sacrifice: He that will not use his Utmost Endeavour to be *reconciled* to his *Brother*, shall find no place for his Prayers with him that can only make them effectual. And *Every Man* is this *Brother*. Vers. 23, 24. 25.

(3.) He not only forbids *Adultery*, which the Law forbids, but *Lust*: The *Ax* of his Doctrine is *laid to the Root of the Tree*; it reaches to the *First Seeds* of things, to the Innermost and most hidden Conceptions Vers. 28, 29. 30.

ceptions of the Mind, becauſe he has brought his Light near, and Searches the innermoſt parts of the Belly with his divine Candle.

(4.) From *Keeping* and *Performing* Legal *Vows* to *not Swearing at all:* And indeed, what Uſe can there be of any Swearing, where Mens *Yea* is *Yea*, and their *Nay*, *Nay*: There their Speech, their anſwers, on all occaſions, ſhould be, at the uttermoſt, but *Yea*, *Yea*; or *Nay*, *Nay*.

Verſ. 33. 34.

(5.) He taught *Not* to *reſiſt Evil*, but to *ſuffer Loſs* rather than enter into Contention: His Divine Wiſdom did fore ſee how much eaſier it would be to *Overcome* the Violent Paſſions of Men by *Patience* than *Controverſie*. And he that Juſtly conſiders the Unrulineſs of ſome Mens Diſpoſitions, their Heats and Prejudices, it will be found that it is not alwayes a Real Injury or Loſs but ſome *Paſſion*, *Revenge* or *Baſe Intereſt* that puts them upon *Clamours* and Sutes of Law.

Verſ. 39. 40.

(6.) He taught us the Higheſt Complaceny and *Charity*: *If any Man compel thee to go a Mile, go with him twain.* Be of an Eaſie and Ready Mind to *Do Good*, to all *Friendly* Offices be *eaſily* preſwaded; and therein rather exceed than fall ſhort of any ones intreaty or neceſſity.

Verſ. 14.

(7.) He taught as great *Liberality* and *Bounty*; to *give to him that aſks, and from him that would borrow*, **not to turn away**: In ſhort, to be Stewards of our *External Subſtance* for the Good of Mankind, according to our *Reſpective* Abilities; not Grutching, Knowing whoſe it

Verſ. 42.

it is, nor Disbelieving as Knowing him who is both able and Bountiful.

(8.) He advances the Doctrine of Loving Friends to the Degree of *Loving Enemies*. *Ye have heard*, ſaid *Jeſus*, *that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour and ſhalt hate thine Enemy; but I ſay unto you,* **Love your Enemies**, bleſs *them that* Curſe *you, do* good *to them that* hate *you, and* pray *for them that* diſpightfully *uſe you and* Perſecute *you*. Surely then, where no Anger dwells, no Revenge can grow; and if we muſt *love Enemies*, there is no Man left to be hated. This is the Doctrine of that *Jeſus* that laid down his Life for all; and this is the End for which he preached it, *That* (ſayes he) *ye may be the Children of your Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his Sun to riſe on the Evil and on the Good, and ſendeth Rain on the* Juſt *and on the* Unjuſt: It is as much as if Chriſt had ſaid; No Man can be like God, who does not *Love* his *Enemies*, and cannot *do good to all:* Conſequently, he that does *Love Enemies* and is ready to *Do good unto all*, he is like God the *Father* that is in Heaven, who is **Love**. Verſ. 43, 44. 45. 1 John 4. 8.

(9.) Chriſt teaches us to avoid *Oſtentation* in our Charity: *Take heed that ye do not your Alms before Men to be ſeen of them.* Mat. 6. 1.

(10.) He teaches us the Duty of *Prayer*, where and what: not in the *Corners* of the Streets nor in the *Synagogues to be ſeen of Men*; but in the **Cloſet**, in the ſecret of the Heart, betwixt God and the Soul. O Heavenly Precepts! He knew our Natures, our Weakneſs, Verſ. 5. 6.

and how to meet with it and mend it. A bleſſed *Phiſitian* indeed! Let us receive him, for he is ſure and he is free.

(11.) He forbids *Hoarding* and Laying up of *Money* in *Bank*; but preſſes our Treaſuring up of Wealth in *Heaven*; and the Reaſon is this, that the one is *Corruptible*, and the other is *Incorruptible*.

Verſ. 19. 20.

(12.) He teaches Dependence upon the *Providence* of *God*; calling the Diſ-truſtful, **O ye of little faith**. *Which of you* (ſays he) *by taking Thought can add one* Cubit *to his Stature? Therefore take no Thought, ſaying, What ſhall we* eat *or what ſhall we* Drink, *or wherewith ſhall we be* clothed? *for after all theſe things the* Gentiles *ſeek; for your Heavenly Father* knoweth, *that you have need of all theſe things. But ſeek ye* **firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs**, *and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

Verſ. 25. to the end.

(13.) He ſets up a Diſcrimination or Diſtinction between *falſe* and *true Prophets*; thoſe that are his Diſciples, from *Counterfeits*. *Ye ſhall know them*, ſaid Chriſt, *by their* Fruits: *Do men gather* Grapes *of Thorns or* Figgs *of Thiſtles? even ſo every* good Tree *bringeth forth* Good Fruit, *but a* Corrupt Tree *bringeth forth* Evil Fruit. *A* Good Tree *cannot bring forth* Evil Fruit, *neither can a* Corrupt Tree *bring forth* Good Fruit: *Wherefore* **by their fruits ye ſhall know them.** This was the Diſtinction given by Chriſt to his Followers; the *Tree* was not accounted a *Good Tree* by the *Leaves*, but the *Fruits*; not by a meer *Opinion*, but *Holy living*. The *Faith* in that Day was an *Entire Reſignation* and *Dependence* upon

Matth. 7. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

upon *God*, and not a Subſcription to *Verbal Propoſitions* and *Articles*, though never ſo True: That was the Work of *After-times*, more *Corrupt* and *Superſtitious Ages*, that laid more ſtreſs upon conſent, ay the very ſhow of it, then Holineſs, without which no man ſhall ever ſee the Lord. But——

(14.) *Laſtly*, Chriſt preaches the *General Judgment*. *Many will ſay to me in that Day*, [what *Day*? the laſt *Day* or *Day* of *Account* and *Final Reckoning* with Mankind:] Lord, Lord, *have we not* prophelied *in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils and done many* Wonderful *Works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you, Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity. Not every one that ſaith*, Lord, Lord, *ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; *but he that* doth the Will of my Father *which is in Heaven. Therefore whoſoever heareth theſe Sayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him unto a Wiſe Man which built his Houſe upon a* Rock, *and the* Rain *deſcended and the* Floods *came, and the* Winds *blew and beat upon that Houſe, and it fell not*, for it was builded upon a Rock. *And every one that heareth theſe Sayings of Mine, and doth them not, ſhall be likened unto a* Fooliſh *Man, which built his Houſe upon the* Sand: *And the Rain deſcended, and the Floods came and the Winds blew, and beat upon that Houſe, and* it fell, *and great was the Fall of it. And it came to paſs, when* Jeſus *had ended theſe Sayings, the People were aſtoniſhed at his Doctrine: for he taught them as one having* Authority, *and not as the* Scribes. Verſ. 21. to the end.

By all which it is moſt plain, that as Chriſt is the *Rock*, on which true *Chriſtians build*; ſo none can be ſaid truly to *build* upon this *Rock*, but thoſe that *keep*

his *Sayings*, that do his Commandments, that obey his Doctrine. Wherefore **that Faith** of **Jesus** to be the **Son** and **Christ** of **God**, must be such a *Faith*, as *does the Will of the Heavenly Father*, and *keepeth* **These Sayings** of Christ.

There are *Two places*, in which Christ seems to sum up his blessed Doctrine: One is this, *Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them*; *for this is the* Law *and the* Prophets; Which (by the way) Christ came not to destroy, but to *fulfil*. But the other Passage seems to be more full, the *first* relating only to our *Dealings* with *Men*; this *Second Passage* comprehending our *Duty* both to *God* and *Men*, viz. *Thou shalt* **Love** *the Lord thy God with* **all** thy Heart *and with* **all** thy Soul, *and with* **all** thy Mind; *this is the first and great Commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour* as thy self. *On these two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

Matth. 7. 12.

Matth. 22. 37, 38, 39.

This is the sum and *Perfection* of the *Christian* Religion, the *great Commandment* of Christ, and the certain token of Discipleship. *A new Commandment* (said Christ) *I give unto you, that ye* Love one another; *as I have loved you, that ye also* love one another: *By this shall all men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye have* love one *to* another. Again, Christ speaks to his Disciples; *If ye* keep *my Commandments, ye shall abide in my* Love, *even as I have* kept *my Father's Commandments, and abide in his* Love: *And this is my Commandment, that ye* Love one another *as I have loved you.* Yea, once more: *Ye are my Friends,*

John 13. 34. 35.

John 15. 10, 12, 14, 17.

if

if ye do, whatsoever I command you, that you Love one another. *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest my self to him: but he that loveth me not, keepeth not my Sayings.* So that only those are Friends and *Disciples* of Christ *Jesus* that do his Sayings and keep his Commandments; and the *Great Commandment* of all is **Love**; for upon this One Commandment do all the rest depend. John 14. 21.

And indeed the reason is very obvious, since he that loves God above all, will leave all for God: Not one of his Commandments shall be slighted: And he that *loves* his *Neighbour* will much more *love* the *Houshold* of *Faith.* Well may such be *True Christians*, when their *Faith* in Christ works by **Love**, by the Power of this *Divine Love:* He that dwells in this *Love*, dewlls in *God*, (if *John* say true) for he is *Love.* 1 John 4. 16. *And in this he recommended his* Love *unto us, that he sent his only Begotten Son,* —— *that whosoever* believeth *in him, should not perish, but have* Everlasting *Life. Also herein did Christ manifest his* Love, *in laying down his Life for us.* John 15. 12, 13, 14. *This is my Commandment*, said Christ, *that ye* Love one another, *as I have loved you*; and *Greater love hath no Man than this, that a Man* lays down *his Life for his Friends*; *ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.* Indeed he gave his Life for the World, and offered up *One Common Sacrifice* for Mankind: And by this *One Offering up of himself, once for all, he hath forever perfected*, that is, quitted and discharged Heb. 10.

charged and taken into Favour *them that are sanctified*; who have received the *Spirit* of *Grace* and *Sanctification* in their Hearts; for such as resist it, receive not the Benefit of that *Sacrifice*, but damnation to themselves.

This Holy *Offering up of himself* by the *Eternal Spirit*, is a Great Part of his *Messiahship*; for therein he hath both confirmed his Blessed Message of *Remission* of *Sins* and *Life Eeverlasting* to as many as truly believe in his Name, and hath given himself a *Propitiation for all that have sinned*, and that thereby *came short of the Glory of God*: Insomuch that God is said by the Apostle *Paul* to be *Just*, and the *Justifier of him which* believeth *in* Jesus, *whom God hath set forth to be a* Propitiation, *through* Faith *in his* Blood, *to declare his Righteousness for the* Remissions *of* Sins *that are past, through the forbearance of God.*

Rom. 3. 25. 26, 27.

Unto which I shall Join his *Mediatorship* or *Advocacy*, link'd together both by the Apostle of the *Gentiles* and the beloved Disciple *John*: The *first* in these words; *For there is One God and one* Mediator *between God and Man, the Man Christ* Jesus, *who gave himself a* Ransom *for all to be testified in due Time.* The Apostle *John* expresseth it thus: *My little Children, these things write I unto you, that* you Sin not; *and if any Man sinneth, we have an* Advocate *with the Father*, Jesus *Christ the Righteous*; *he is the* Propitiation *for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the* whole *World.* So that to be Brief, the *Christian Creed*, so far as it is Declaratory, lies eminently in a Confession of these Particulars. Of the *Divine Authority*

1 Tim. 2. 5. 6.

1 John 2. 1, 2.

of

of the *New* as well as of the *Old Teſtament Writings*, and particularly of theſe Great, General and Obvious Truths therein expreſſed, to wit, Of God and *Chriſt*, his *Miracles*, *Doctrine*, *Death*, *Reſurrection*, *Advocacy* or *Mediation*, the Gift of his *Light*, *Spirit* or *Grace*; of *Faith*, and *Repentance from dead Works* unto *Remiſſion* of *Sins*, *Keeping* his *Commandments*, and laſtly of *Eternal Recompence*.——Leſs, once, than all this, would have done; and it does not ſhew the *Age* more Chriſtian, but more Curious, indeed more *Infidel*, to be ſure more Captious and Froward, that there is this Stir made about *External Creeds* of *Communion*: For *Diſtruſt* of Brethern and *Incredulity* among Chriſtians are no ſmall Signs of their Decay of Faith towards God: *From the Beginning It was not ſo.*

But it may be here Objected, *How ſhall we know, that ſuch a* Declaration *of* Faith *is ſincere*? I Anſwer, By recurring to that Evidence which God ſhall give us. They that can *try Spirits* under the *moſt-Sheep-like Clothing*, have the moſt-Immediate and Certain Proof, and ſuch an one there is by the ſavour and reliſh the Spirit of God gives, to them that have it, of the Spirits of men: But let it ſuffice, that Chriſt hath told us, *By their Fruits ye ſhall know them. If any Man*, ſays Chriſt, *will come after me, let him take up his* Croſs *and follow me:* and in another place he tells us thus; *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them and they follow me*; that is, They are led by my *Spirit*, they live my *Life*, they obey my *Doctrine* they are of my own Nature. And the Apoſtle *Peter* aſſures us, that *True Faith purifies the Heart*

1 John 4.

Matth. 16. 24.

John 10. 27.

and

and no Impurity can flow from a pure
Acts 15. 9. *Heart*. You may know this *Faith* by that Way, by which *Abraham's Faith* was known to be *True*, to wit, *Obedience*. *He believed God*, that is, He *Obeyed* God; he submitted to the Will of God, and relied upon his Goodness: As if he had said, and he said it doubtless to himself, *He that gave me my Son by a* Miracle, *can*
Rom. 4. *work another to save him*: *To God all*
2 Cor. 4. 13. *things are Possible*. It is call'd by the Apostle *Paul*, The **Spirit** of *Faith*; something more near and inward than any *External Articles* and *Declaration* of *Faith*: That from whence all True *Confessions* and *good Works* came; which made the Apostle *Paul* thus to say; *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you*
1 Thes. 1. 2,3. *in our Prayers, remembring without Ceasing your* **Work** *of* Faith

'Twas this true *Faith*, that brings forth *Works* of *Righteousness*, by which *Abel Offered* to God, *Enoch* was *Translated*, *Noah* was *saved*. It is said of him, that he became *Heir* of the *Righteousness* which is by *Faith*. By this *Faith Abraham* left his own Country and obey'd the Voice of God. By *Faith Moses* was preserved from his Childhood; and, when he came to years, refus'd to be called the *Son* of *Pharaoh's Daughter*: By *Faith* he forsook *Egypt*, and passed the *Red Sea*. By *Faith* the *Walls* of *Jericho* fell down and *Rahab* was saved. By *Faith Gideon*, *Barak*, *Samson*, *Jephtha*, *David*, *Samuel* and the Prophets *subdued* Kingdoms, *wrought* Righteousness, *obtained* Promises, *stopped* the Mouths of Lyons,
Heb. 11. *quenched* the Violence of Fire, *escaped* the Edge of the Sword, with much more, too large to be utter'd here. This

This is that *Faith*, which the Apoſtle *James* magnifies againſt all falſe *Faiths*: *Faith* (ſays he) *if it has not* Works, *is dead. A Man may ſay, Thou haſt* Faith, *and I have* Works; *ſhew me thy* Faith *without thy* Works, *and I will ſhew thee my* Faith *by my* Works. And as if he had fore-ſeen the puther made by the Men of *Creeds* and *Articles*, he ſpeaks on this wiſe; *Thou believeſt that there is One God, thou doſt well; the* **Devils alſo believe and Tremble.** *But wilt thou know, O Vain Man, that* Faith *without* Works, *is dead? Was not* Abraham *our Father juſtified by* Works, *when he had offered* Iſaac *his Son upon the Altar? ſeeſt thou how* Faith *wrought with his* Works? *and by* Works *was* Faith *made perfect.* —— And he was called the *Friend* of *God.* Very notable and informing is that expreſſion of his, *The Devils,* **alſo,** *believe and Tremble*; as if he had ſaid, the Devil believes as well as you, and trembles too, which is more. This ſhows there is a Faith that is not the true Faith, and that not with relation to the matters believed, but the Spirit of the mind in believing; for the *Devils* believe the Truth, litterally, but their Faith works not by love, no more then their Knowledge *by Obedience*, and therefore it does them no Good, and is not the true Faith. O that *Chriſtendom* would lay this very one thing to Heart! But I muſt proceed.

Jam. 2. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

The Exhortation of the Apoſtle *Peter* is a further and plain Diſcrimination of true *Faith*; *And beſides this, giving all Diligence, add to your Faith* Virtue, *and to Virtue* Knowledge, *and to Knowledge* Temperance, *and to Temperance* Patience, *and to Patience* Godlineſs,

2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

neſs, *and to Godlineſs* Brotherly Kindneſs, *and to Brotherly Kindneſs* Charity. *For if theſe things be in you and abound, they make you that ye ſhall neither be* barren *nor* unfruitful *in the Knowledge of our Lord* Jeſus *Chriſt. But he that* lacketh *theſe things is* blind, *and cannot ſee far off, and hath* forgotten *that he was purged from his old Sins*: as if he had ſaid, they have forgot where they begun that think they can be Chriſtians without a Life of Holineſs.

I will ſeal up theſe Scripture-Teſtimonies of *Faith* with that *Account* which is given us by the Apoſtle *John*; *For whatſoever is born of God, o-*

1 Joh. 5. 4, 5. *vercometh the World: And this is the* **Victory**, *that overcometh the World, even our* **Faith**. *Who is he that overcometh the World, but he that* believeth *that* Jeſus *is the* Son of God? So that the *Belief* in the *Son* of *God* muſt have this Evidence to prove it a true belief in Gods account, that by it Men are *born of God* and *overcome the World*: wherefore their *Faith* is falſe whom the

John 14. 17. *World Overcomes: I am not of this World,* ſaith Chriſt *Jeſus*; neither can that *Faith* be, that is rightly called the *Faith* of the *Son* of *God*.

There are *Three Paſſages* left us upon Record by this Beloved Diſciple of *Jeſus* of Great Weight and Importance to us: When he had diſcourſed of the *Propitiation* and *Advocacy* of Chriſt, he does immediately add; *And hereby do we know that we*

1 John 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. *know him, if we* keep *his Commandments.* He that ſaith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, *is a* Lyar, *and the Truth is not in him. But whoſo* keepeth *his Word, in him verily is the* Love *of God* perfected: *hereby know we, that we are in him. He that ſaith, he abideth in him,*

him, **Ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.**

The *Second* Passage very pertinent to this present matter is in the next Chapter; *My little Children, let us not* love *in word neither in tongue, but in* deed *and in* Truth. *And hereby we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our Hearts before him: For if our Heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved*; **if our heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God: and whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his Commandments,** *and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his Commandment, that we should* believe *on the Name of his Son* **Jesus Christ,** *and* love one another, *as he gave us Commandment.* Chap. 3. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

The *Third* and last Passage, which I shall mention on this Account is in his fourth Chapter of the same *Epistle*, viz. *And we have seen and do testifie, that the* Father *sent the* Son *to be the Saviour of the World. Whosoever shall confess that* Jesus *is the* Son *of* God, *God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the* Love *that God hath to us. God is* **Love**; *and he that dwelleth in* Love **dwelleth in God, and God in him.** *Herein our* love *is made perfect, that we may have* Boldness *in the Day of Judgment, because,* **as he is, so are we in this World.** So that keeping Gods Word, and Commandments, and our Consciences from accusing us, and our being like to Christ in this World, is our *loving* of God as we ought to love him. Chap. 4. 14, 15, 16, 17.

These are the *Holy Fruits* of all those that *love God* and

and *believe in Christ*, that are the Family of th
Faithful, regenerated and redeemed from the Earth
Where-ever two or three of them are met together
Christ is in the midst of them; they neither As
nor Hope in vain. With this Character let us tak
a View of all *Persons* and *Societies* of Christian
throughout the World, not forgetting our selves

Let us *hereby* try their *Faith* and *Religi-*
Jam. 1. 27. *on* and our own; if it be of *God* th
Father, it is *Pure* and *Undefiled*; it lead
them that have it, to *Visit the Fatherless and Wido*
in their Affliction, and to keep themselves *Unspo-*
ted from the World: Is this our Case? O that it
were so!

If it be Objected, *Which way shall we obtain this lik*
Precious Faith; I answer, You must take diligent
Heed to the *Light* and *Grace* that come by *Jesus*;
that *Candle* of the *Lord* which he has set up in
our Souls: we must bring our Deeds to this *Light*,

and see if they be wrought in God or
John 3. 20. 21. no? For this gives us to discern be-
twixt the Precious and the Vile; the
one gives Joy, the other brings a load of Guilt up-
on the Soul: Do we not *know* that we *Do the thing*
we ought not, and that we *Leave undone the things w*
ought to do? This Alas! will be our Judgment one day,
the last, the terrible day: For therefore Men are
Condemnable, because they *know*.

Those, therefore, that would *obtain this precious*
Faith that overcomes the World, must embrace
the *Grace* of our Lord *Jesus* Christ by which this
Faith is begotten; and they, who believe not in this
Grace, nor receive it in the love of it, nor give
themselves up to be taught and led by it, can never

be

be ſaid truly to believe in him, from whom it comes, any more then the *Jews* may be ſaid to *believe in God*, when they rejected him that came from God, his *Beloved Son*. He that denyes the *Meaſure* can never own or receive the *Fulneſs*. *John* bears Record, that he was *Full of Grace and Truth, and that of his* Fulneſs *they received, and Grace for Grace: for the Law was given by* Moſes, *but Grace and Truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*: So that 'tis utterly Impoſſible for a Man to *believe in Chriſt*, and not to be taught and lead by the *Grace* that comes from him and by him. John 1. 14. 16. 17.

'Tis a Common ſaying of People in theſe dayes, *We are not under the Law but under Grace*; who are in Truth under *Sin* and the *Law* of *Death*, and Subjects to the *Prince* of the Power of the Air *who reigns in the Hearts of the Children of Diſobedience*; and their Lives ſhow it: No, thoſe are under *Grace* that live the holy Life of Grace. *For the Grace of* God, *that bringeth Salvation*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, *hath Appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts we ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World*: Theſe are the People that *believe* in Chriſt, unto the ſaving of the Soul. This is that Bleſſed *Light* which ſhines in the hearts of thoſe that believe, and *gives them the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of* Jeſus *Chriſt*. The Ancients walk'd in it, and found Eternal Life by it. *I am the* Light *of the* World, ſaid Chriſt, *he that follows me, ſhall not walk in Darkneſs but have the* Light *of* Life. The Saints Armed themſelves with it againſt the Ephes. 22. 2 Tit. 11. 12. John 8. 12.

fiery Darts of *Satan*, and by the Ver-
Rom. 13. 12, 13, 14. tue and Power that is in it, were enabled to overcome Temptation. And this will be the Condemnation of *Disobedient Men*, that they ſee, but ſhut their Eyes; they know the *Light*, but rebel againſt it. Chriſt by his holy *Light* in the *Conſcience* ſhews Men their Danger, warns them of it before it comes upon them: No Man on Earth can plead either *Ignorance* or *Surpriſe*.

'Tis true, the *Candle of the Wicked is*
Job 21. 17. *often put out*; But that implies, It is often *lighted*, and that men Sin againſt Conviction, againſt Sight and Knowledge: It is wilful, and that's dangerous. No *Faith* in Diſobedience will do; no Faith without *holy Fruits*, *holy Works*, will ſave. Men muſt be *born again* if ever they will enter into the *Kingdom* of
John. 3. 34. *God*: there is no Fellowſhip between *Chriſt* and *Belial*: People muſt part
2 Cor. 6. 14. 15. with their *Vile Affections* and *Inordinate Deſires*, or they are no Company for Chriſt; they have no Share in him. What part can *Pride* have in Humility, *Wrath* in Meekneſs, *Luſt* in Self-danial, *Revenge* in Forgiveneſs? To pretend to believe in Chriſt, and not to be like him, is a Contradiction. *This*
1 Joh. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. *is the Meſſage* (ſaid the Beloved Diſciple) *which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is* Light; *and in him is no Darkneſs at all: If we ſay, that we have Fellowſhip with him and walk in Darkneſs, we* lye *and do not the Truth.* The Truth is, all ſuch *Faith* and Profeſſion are a *Lye, and that in the Right Hand*, a Cheat

Cheat upon a Man's Self. *But*, ſays he, *if* **we walk** *in the* Light as God is in the Light, *we have Fellowſhip one with another, and the Blood of* Jeſus *Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from* **all Sin.** *If we ſay, that we have no Sin* [to be cleanſed from] *we deceive our ſelves, and the Truth is not in us*: But *if we confeſs our Sins, he is Faithful and Juſt to forgive us our Sins, and to* **Cleanſe** *us from* **all** Unrighteouſneſs. Iſa. 44. 20.

To Conclude, Chriſt *Jeſus*, the Son of God and Saviour of the World is *Holy*, *Harmleſs* and *Undefiled*, and ſo muſt his Followers be: He is no Head of a Corrupt Body, nor Maſter of Rebellious Servants: He that has not the *Wedding Garment*, muſt be caſt out: The Branch that brings not forth Fruit, will be cut off. But thoſe that truly believe in his Name, walk in his *Light*, and are taught by his *Grace* to renounce the *Luſts of the Eye*, *the Luſts of the Fleſh and Pride of Life*; the Unjuſt Profits, Pleaſures and Pomps of this World, and chuſe to follow him in his own Holy Way of Reſignation and Regeneration, the ſame is his *Brother*, his *Siſter* and his *Mother*. And whatever *Loſſes* they may here ſuſtain for his Names ſake, they have the Promiſe of an *Hundredfold* in this Life and the Inheritance of that which is Eternal. Mark 3. 32, 33, 34, 35. Mat. 19. 28, 29.

And I do fervently beſeech Almighty God, the Giver of all *Saving Faith*, mercifully to Vouchſafe, more and more, to beget a *Serious Inquiry* in us, What that *Faith* is, which we have? Who is the Author of it? And what Fruits It hath brought forth? That ſo we may not prophane the Name of

God by a *Vain Profession* of it, nor abuse our selves unto *Eternal Perdition*; But that we may endeavour, by God's Assistance, to approve our selves such Believers as sincerely fear God, love Righteousness and hate every Evil Way, as becomes the Redeemed of God by the pretious Blood of his Son. Since therefore we are not our own, but the *Lord's*, who hath bought us with that Great Price, let us glorifie him in our *Bodies*, in our *Souls* and in our *Spirits* which are his: Then shall we be Children of *Abraham*, indeed; Heirs of the Promises, Partakers of that Resurrection and Life, that Immortality and Glory, which God the Righteous Judge will, one Day, plentifully distribute to them that abide in this pretious *Faith* unto the End. This naturally brings me to my *Third Head*, and an Unhappyness we have long laboured under.

Sect. 4. *Of Debasing of the true* Value *of* Morality *under pretence of* Higher Things; *and mistaking, in great Measure, the very* End *of* Christ's Coming.

BY **Morality** I understand Vertuous Living, Purity of Manners; that Justice, Temperance, Truth, Charity, and Blameleness in Conversation, out of Conscience and Duty to God and Man, which may well Denominate the Man that lives that Life, a **Man Just**, Virtuous and Pious: In short,
Mat 7.12. one *that does unto all men, as he would have all Men do unto him*; this is my *Moral Man*. It is Notorious how small an Estimate *Two sorts*

ſorts of People have put upon him, the *Prophane* and the *Profeſſers*, the *Publicans* and the *Phariſees*: The *Firſt* deſpiſe him as too *Squeamiſh*, *Nice* and *Formal*; they deride his Regularity and make a Jeſt of his Preciſeneſs. And thinking *No Man can be good*, becauſe they are Nought, and that all muſt needs fall by thoſe Temptations they will not reſiſt, they conſtrue *Sobriety* to be a Trick to decoy Mankind, and put a Cheat upon the World. If they hear any one ſay, *Such a Man is a Sober and Juſt Perſon*, They have learned, by themſelves, to call him *Knave*; that he has a *Deſign* upon ſome body by being *Juſt* in little things to Cheat in things of more Moment. This Man is very Unfaſhionable among Men of *Immoral Principles*; for his very Looks and Life carry a Reproof with them upon *Vitious Men*; who, as if Virtue were their *Common Enemy*, are in Combination againſt the Lovers and Entertainers of her: The reaſon is becauſe ſuch true *Virtuoſo* will neither do the Ill things they would have them, nor flatter them in the Ills they do; and therefore where Ill Men have the Power, Good Men are ſure to be made the *Common Enemy*.

But the Reproaches that Men of *Morality* receive at the Hands of Lewd Men are more their Honour than their Suffering: That which is moſt of all Anxious is that *Morality* is denyed to be *Chriſtianity*; that Virtue has any Claim to Grace, and that thoſe who glory to be called *Chriſtians*, can be ſo Partial and Cruel as to renounce a meer *Juſt Man* their Society, and ſend him packing among the *Heathen* for Damnation. And pray what's the Matter? *Why! though this Perſon be a*

ſober Liver, *yet he is but a* General Believer; *his* Faith *is at large: 'Tis true, he believes in God, but I heare little of his* Faith *in* Chriſt. Very well: Does he not therefore *believe in Chriſt*? or muſt he therefore be without the Pale of Salvation? Is it poſſible that a Man can truly *believe in God* and be damned? But as he that *believes in Chriſt, believes in God*, ſo he that believes in God, believes in Chriſt: *For he that believes* on him, *that raiſed up* Jeſus *from the Dead, his* Faith *ſhall be imputed to him for Righteouſneſs*, and ſays Chriſt himſelf; *He that believeth my Word, and believeth on* him that ſent me, *hath Everlaſting Life:* Has he that *believes in God* no Intereſt in this Expreſſion? But more particular is that place of the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, viz. *For he that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a Diligent Rewarder of them that ſeek him.* Now if thoſe who ſo *believe* can come to God, the *Moral Man's* Condition is not Dangerous even in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the Word; not only ſuch as have a *General Faith* of *Chriſtianity*, and never adhered to any particular *Party*, a Senſe, we ſhall anon conſider, but even thoſe who never heard the *Hiſtory* of Chriſt, nor had a diſtinct Knowledge of him, as we profeſs him.

Rom. 4. 22, 23, 24.

John 5. 24.

Heb. 11. 6.

For it ſeems a moſt unreaſonable thing, that *Faith in God* and keeping his Commandments ſhould be no Part of the *Chriſtian Religion*: But if a *Part* it be, as upon ſerious Reflection who dare deny it, then thoſe before and ſince Chriſt's time, who never had the External Law nor Hiſtory, and have *done the things contained in the Law, their Conſciences not Accuſing*

cuſing nor Hearts Condemning, but excuſing them before God, are in ſome degree concern'd in the Character of a true *Chriſtian*. For Chriſt himſelf preach'd and kept his Father's Commandments, and came to fulfil and not to deſtroy the Law; and that not only in his own Perſon, but that *the Righteouſneſs of the Law might be alſo fulfilled in us*. Rom. 8. 4.

Let us but ſoberly conſider *What Chriſt is*, and we ſhall the better know whether *Moral Men* are to be reckoned Chriſtians. What is Chriſt but *Meekneſs*, *Juſtice*, *Mercy*, *Patience*, *Charity* and *Virtue* in Perfection? Can we then deny a *meek Man* to be a Chriſtian, a *Juſt*, a *Merciful*, a *Patient*, a *Charitable* and a *Virtuous* Man to be like Chriſt? *By me Kings reign and Princes decree Juſtice*, ſaith Wiſdom, yea, the *Wiſdom that is from above*; ſo may I ſay here, By Chriſt men are *Meek*, *Juſt*, *Merciful*, *Patient*, *Charitable* and *Virtuous*. And *Chriſtians* ought to be diſtinguiſhed by their *likeneſs* to *Chriſt* and not their *Notions* of *Chriſt*; by his Holy Qualifications rather than their own Lofty Profeſſions and Invented Formalities. What ſhall we ſay then of that Extravagancy which thoſe Men are guilty of who upon hearing a *ſober Man* commended, that is not of any great Viſible *Profeſſion*, will take upon them to caſt him off with this Sentence; *Tuſh, he is but a* Moral Man; *he knows nothing of* ſaving Grace; *he may be damn'd for all his* Morality. Nay, ſome have gone ſo far as to ſay and preach, if not Print, *That there are Thouſands of* Moral Men *in Hell*. Prov. 8. 15.

But 'tis worth our while to conſider that he that ſins *is not ſaved by Grace* in that ſtate, and that the

Virtuous Man is the *Gratious Man*; For 'tis the Nature and End of true *Grace*, to make Men ſo. Unanſwerable is that Paſſage of the Apoſtle, to the *Romans*, *Therefore if the* Uncircumciſion *keep the Righteouſneſs of the* Law, *ſhall not his* Uncircumciſion *be counted for* Circumciſion? *and ſhall not* Uncircumciſion *which is by Nature, if it fulfil the* Law, *judge thee who by the Letter and* Circumciſion *doſt tranſgreſs the* Law? *For he is not a* Jew, *who is one* outwardly, *neither is that Circumciſion, which is outward in the* Fleſh; *but he is a* Jew, *which is one* inwardly, *and Circumciſion is that of the* Heart, *in the* Spirit, *and not in the* Letter, *whoſe praiſe is not of Men, but of God.* So that he who keeps the *Law* of God and abſtains from the Impurity of the World is the *good Man*, the *Juſt Liver*; he is the Apoſtle's true *Jew* and *Circumciſion*.

Rom. 2. 26, 72, 28, 29.

Wherefore it is not Ill expreſt by that extraordinary Man *J. Hales* of *Eton*: 'The *Moral Man* (ſays 'he) *is a* Chriſtian *by the* ſurer *Side*: As if he had ſaid, *Speculations* may fail, *Notions* be miſtaken, *Forms* wither, but *Truth* and Righteouſneſs will ſtand the Teſt; and the Man that loves them will not be moved. He tells us, *That the* Fathers *had that Opinion of the Sincerety of the Life of ſome* Heathens *that they believed God had in Store for ſuch his even* Saving Grace, *and that he would make them Poſſeſſors, of his Everlaſting Kingdom.* And meaſuring your Satisfaction by the Pleaſure I took in reading what the Author both quotes and Comments upon this Subject, I will venture to tranſcribe him at large, whoſe Authority ought to go as far as his reaſon, and he claims no more nor indeed does any reaſonable

able Man, ſince God himſelf ſeems to ſubmit to that Method of overcomeing us, to wit, Conviction. Viz.

"Let it not trouble you, (ſaith he) that I intitle "them to ſome part of our "*Chriſtian Faith*, and there- "fore without Scruple to "be received as Weak, and "not to be caſt forth as Dead.

J. Hales of *Eton*, *Golden Remains*, Of dealing with Erring *Chriſtians*, pag. 36, 37.

"*Salvianus* diſputiug What *Faith* is; *Quid eſt igi-* "*tur Credulitas vel Fides?* (ſaith he) *Opinor fideli-* "*ter hominem Chriſto credere*, id eſt, *Fidelem Deo* "*eſſe*, hoc eſt, *Fideliter Dei mandata ſervare.* What "might this *Faith* be? (ſaith he) I ſuppoſe, it is no- "thing elſe, but *Faithfully to believe Chriſt*; and "this is to be Faithful unto God; which is nothing "elſe, but Faithfully to *keep the Commandments of* "*God.* Not therefore only a bare Belief, but the Fi- "delity and Truſtineſs of God's Servants, faith- "fully accompliſhing the Will of our Maſter, is re- "quired as a part of our *Chriſtian Faith.*

"Now, all thoſe good "things which *Moral Men* "by the *Light* of *Nature* * "do, are a part of God's "Will written in *their* "*Hearts:* wherefore ſo far "as they were *Conſcientious* "in performing them (if "*Salvianus* his Reaſon be "good;) ſo far have "they Title and Intereſt in "our *Faith.* And therefore "*Regulus* that Famous *Ro-*

* Or the *Light* which comes with us into the World, and grows up with us, as we are of a capacity to diſcern the Teachings of it. See *John* 1. 9. ch. 8. 12. *Rom.* 1. 19. *Epheſ.* 15. 13. 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. All agree in it, as to its Univerſality. But the beloved Diſciple inſtructs us of its Original, Nature and Uſe, in the firſt Chapter of his Evangelical Hiſtory, deeply and clearly: They had it

"*man*

before Christ's coming, as may be seen in *Job* 18. 5, 6. ch. 21. 17. ch. 24. 13, 16. *Psal.* 27. 1. 36. 9. *Prov.* 20. 27.

" *man*, when he endured in-
" finite Torments, rather
" than he would break his
" *Oath*, may thus far be
" counted a *Martyr* and
" Witness for the Truth. For the Crown of *Mar-*
" *tyrdom* sits not only on the Heads of those, who
" have lost their Lives, rather than they would
" cease to profess the *Name* of *Christ*; but on the
" Head of every one that suffers for the Testimony
" of a good Conscience and for Righteousness sake.
" And here I cannot pass by one very General and
" gross Mistake of our Age. For in our Discourses
" concerning the Notes of a *Christian Man*, by what
" Signs we may know a Man to be one of the *Vi-*
" *sible Company* of *Christ*, we have so tied our
" selves to this outward Profession, that if we
" know no other Virtue in a Man, but that he hath
" *Cond* his *Creed* by heart, let his Life be never so
" *prophane*, we think it Argument enough for us to
" account him within the *Pale* and Circuit of the
" *Church*. On the Contrary side, let his Life be
" never so *Upright*, if either he be little seen in, or
" peradventure quite ignorant of the *Mystery* of
" Christ, we esteem of him but as *dead*. And
" those, who conceive well of those *Moral* good
" things, as of some Tokens giving Hope of Life,
" we account but as a kind of *Maniochees*, who
" thought the very Earth had Life in it. I
" must confess that I have not yet made that
" Proficiency in the Schools of our Age, as that I
" could see, why the *Second Table* and the Acts of
" it are not as properly the parts of *Religion* and
" *Christianity*, as the Acts and Observations of the
" *First*?

"*First:* If I miſtake, than it is *St. James* that hath "abus'd me; for he deſcribing *Religion* by its *pro-* "*per Acts*, tells us, that **True Religion** *and un-* "*defiled before God and the Father, is, to* **viſit** *the* "*Fatherleſs and the Widow in their Affliction, and to* "*keep himſelf* **Unſpotted** *of the World.* So that the "thing which is an *Eſpecial refine Dialect* of the New "*Chriſtian Language* ſignifies nothing but *Mo-* "*rality* and *Civility*, that in the Language of the "holy Ghoſt imports **True Religion**. Thus far *J. Hales.*

He hath ſaid ſo well on this Account, that there is little need I ſhould ſay any more; yet let me add thus much: Did Men mind the *Language* of the *Holy Ghoſt* more than their own Conceits, they would not Stile thoſe meer *Moral Men* in a way of Diſgrace, who are not of their *Perſwaſion*; it would ſuffice, that Thoſe that *fear God and work Righteouſneſs in all Nations are accepted of him*; That Chriſt himſelf hath ſaid, *He that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; and of them that work Iniquity, *Depart from me, I know you not.*

Acts 11. 34, 35.

Mat. 7.

My Friends, let us not deceive our ſelves, *God will not be mocked*; *Such as we ſow, we ſhall certainly reap.* The Tree is known by its Fruits, and will be Judg'd according to its Fruits. *The Wages of Sin is Death*: Men will find it ſo; and every Man ſhall receive his Reward ſutable to his Work. For Peo-ple to talk of *Special Grace*, and yet be carried away by *Common Temptations*: To let Pride, Vanity, Covetouſneſs, Revenge, *&c.* predominate, it is

Gal. 6. Mat. 7.

Rom. 6. 23.

Pro-

Provoking to God: But to conceit that the Righteous God will Indulge his people in that *Latitude*, which he condemns in other Men, is Abominable. 'Tis *Sanctification*, that makes the *Saint*; and *Self-Denyal* that constitutes the *Christian*; and not filling our Heads and Elevating our Fancies by applying those Promises to our selves, which as yet we have no Interest in, though we may think they belong to no body else: This *Spiritual Flattery* of our selves is most pernicious. I cannot but say with the Apostle, *'Tis neither Circumcision nor Uncircumcision*, Jew *nor* Gentile (this nor t'other thing) *but the New Creature, created after Christ* Jesus *in Holiness*: *for without Holiness no Man shall ever see the Lord.* And what is *Holiness*, but Abstaining from Wickedness? And what's that but keeping the Law of God? *Great Peace have they that love thy Law*, said *David*, that had known the Trouble of Breaking it: Therefore it is that *Grace and Truth are come by* Jesus *Christ*, to help us to *fulfill the Law*, not to Excuse our *Disobedience to the Law*: And what before we were Unable, this gives us Force to do. So that *Christianity* is not an *Indulgence* of people under Weakness and Disobedience, but the Compleating and Perfection of that Righteousness which without him was but Short & Imperfect, through the all-sufficient *Grace* and *Power* that came by *Jesus* Christ.

Rom. 2. 29. Gal. 6. 15. Heb. 12. 14.

Psal. 119. 165.

John 1. 16, 17.

Give me leave, I beseech you, for I have a Godly Jealousie upon me; I fear, lest the very *End of Christs Coming* is *Mistaken*. And of how Dreadful a Consequence such a *Mistake* would be, you cannot possiby be Ignorant, that believe there is *No Sal-*

Salvation in another Name. Let us hear the Testimony of Scripture: They are the Words of Christ himself; *I must preach the Kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent.* Now, what is this *Kingdom* of *God* but God's Government? and where is this *Kingdom* and Government to be set up but in Man? So Christ tells us; *Behold the Kingdom of God is within you.* So that the Reason of his being sent, is *that the Kingdom and Government of the* Devil may be destroyed, the strong Man that kept the House, *the Heart be dispossed*, and the *Kingdom* and *Government* of *God* in the *Soul* erected and established. We are taught to Pray for it, as little as we make of it. *Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done*: Would to God people would but consider what they Pray for! For they are scandal'd at the thing they ask, and both neglect and revile the Substance of their own Prayers: *Thy Kingdom come, and thy Will be done*; but believe neither. It was the Office God designed his Son to. *The Thief* (says Christ) *does not come, but to kill, to steal and to destroy:* that is, to *steal* away the Heart from God, and to *kill* and to *destroy* all Good Desires and Inclinations in the *Soul*: For the *Devil* is this *Thief* and *Destroyer*: But *I am come*, says Christ, *that ye might have Life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.* Again, *O Death, I will be thy Death!* as if he had said, I will kill that which kills the Soul: I will breath the *Breath* of *Life* into it again; and, by my *Spirit* and *Grace*, I will beget *Holy Motions* and kindle *Heavenly Desires* in It after God, after the Kingdom of God, and the Righte-

Luke 4.43. ch. 17. 20. Luke 11.2. John 10. 11. John 10. 10. Hos. 13. 4.

ousness

ouſneſs thereof: This is the *Newneſs of Life*: And I will not only reſtore that *Life* the *Soul* has loſt, but I will encreaſe it: I will add to it, that It may have *Life more abundantly*; more power and ſtrength to reſiſt Evil, and embrace and delight in that which is Good.

Rom. 6. 4.

Indeed he was Anointed of God for this Purpoſe; and is therefore called the *Reſtorer* of *Paths*, the *Repairer* of *Breaches* and *the Builder up* of *Waſte Places*; that is, he is ordained of God for the Recovery of Man from his *Fallen* and *Diſobedient State*, This is the Reaſon of his Name: *Thou ſhalt call his Name* Jeſus, ſaid the Angel, *for he ſhall ſave his People from their Sins*: Not from *Wrath* only, but from *Sin*, which is the Cauſe of Wrath. That is; of Bad Men he will make them really good Men, and of Sinful and Unholy he will make them Holy and Righteous Men, ſuch as truly believe in him. This is the Burden of *John's* Teſtimony: *There is one*, ſays he, *that cometh after me, is mightier then I, he ſhall Baptize you with the* Holy Ghoſt *and with* Fire; *whoſe* Fan *is in his Hand, and he will* Throughly purge *his Floor.* And ſeeing *Jeſus* coming to him, ſaid, *Behold the Lamb of God, which* Taketh away *the* Sin *of the World!*

Matth. 1. 21.

Matth. 3. 11, 12.

John 1. 69.

I know the Uſe that too many make of theſe Scriptures, as if they were an *Hebraiſm* borrowed from the *Old Sacrifices*, which may be ſaid *to take away Sin* by taking away the *Guilt*, and not that the *Natures* of Men are *Reſtored* and *Perfected*. And indeed, this is that Senſe which I dread above all others, becauſe it perverts the *End* of *Chriſt Coming*, and

and lodges Men in a Security pernitious to their own Souls. For though it is most true, that *Remission* of *Sin* was and is preached in his Name and Blood, and that *Sin*, in a Sense, may be said to be *Taken away*, when the *Guilt* of the *Sin* is removed by Remission; yet this is only of *Sin past*, that upon Repentance is forgiven: But this is not the Whole, Full and Evangelical Sense, as Christ's own words do plainly import. *For* says he, *the* Son *of* Man *is come to* save *that which was* Lost: And upon another Occasion he expresseth himself to the same purpose, and almost in the same words; *For the* Son *of* Man *is come to* seek *and to* save *that which was Lost*. Now, who is this that is *Lost* but *Man?* and in what Sense can *Man* be said to be *Lost* but by *Sin* and *Disobedience?* that it was which cast him out of the Presence and Garden of God, and put him in a Condition of *Eternal Misery*. If Christ then came to *Save Lost Man*, he must be understood to *Save* him from that which puts him into a Lost Condition, and that is *Sin*; for *The Wages of* Sin *is Death*, and the *Servant* of *Sin* is a *Son* of *Perdition*.

Acts 10. 43. Ephes. 1. 7.

Matth. 18. 11. Luke 19. 10.

Rom. 6. 23.

Christ has determin'd this Point beyond all Exception in his Discourse with the *Jews* (*John* 8. 31, 32, 33, 34.) *Then said* Jesus *to those* Jews, *which believed on him, if ye* continue *in my Word, then are ye my* Desciples indeed; *and ye shall* know *the Truth, and the* Truth *shall make you* Free. What *Freedom* was this? Certainly from *Sin*; suitable to that

passage

passage in his Prayer: **Sanctify** *them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth.* ch. 17. 17.

But some *Jews* present, proud of their Priviledges, apprehended not the *Liberty* Christ spoke of, and therefore answer'd him thus: *We are* Abraham's *Seed and were never in* Bondage *to any Man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made* Free? *Jesus* answered them; *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth Sin is the* Servant *of Sin.* In which place it is very remarkable that Men are only to be distinguished by their Works; that no Claims, Priviledges, Successions or Discents are available, but *He that* **commits** *Sin is the* **Servant** *of Sin.* So that Christ's *Free Man* is he that is *Freed from Sin:* This is his Follower and Disciple. And as Christ oppos'd the Works of the *Jews*, who unjustly sought to kill him, to their Pretensions they made to be *Abraham's Seed*; so must we oppose the *Actions* of Ill Men to their better *Professions*: we must faithfully tell them, *He that commits Sin is the Servant of Sin*; from which *Servitude* Christ came to *Save* his people, and is therefore rightly called The **Saviour** and the **Redeemer**.

This Doctrine is closely followed by the Apostle *Paul* in his *sixth Chapter* to the *Romans*. *Therefore we are* buried *with him by Baptism* into Death, *that like as Christ was raised up from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in* Newness *of* Life —— *Knowing this, that our Old Man is* crucified *with him, that the* Body *of* Sin *might be* destroyed, *that henceforth we should not serve* Sin. —— *Likewise reckon ye also your selves to be* Dead *indeed* unto Rom. 6. 4, 6, 11.

to Sin, *but alive unto God through* Jesus *Christ our Lord*. As if he had said; The *End* of *Christs Coming* is to turn People from their Sins; and that those who persist in their Disobedience, resist the Benefits that come by him.

Let not Sin *therefore* **reign** *in your mortal Body, that ye should obey it in the Lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your Members as* **Instruments** *of Unrighteousness unto* Sin; *but yield your selves unto God, as those that are Alive from the Dead, and your Members as Instruments of* Righteousness *unto God.* Rom. 6. 12, 13, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23. — *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield your selves Servants to obey,* **his Servants** *ye are to whom ye obey; whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness?* — *For when ye were the* Servants *of* Sin, *ye were free from Righteousness. What Fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? for the End of those things is Death. But now being made* Free from Sin, *and become Servants to God, ye have your* **Fruit unto Holiness**, *and the End Everlasting Life. For the Wages of Sin is Death; but the Gift of God is Eternal Life through* Jesus Christ *our Lord.*

To Conclude, nothing can be more apparent, then that *Freedom from Actual Sinning*, and giving *Newness* of *Life* to the Souls of Men, was the great Reason of *Christs Coming*, and the *End* for which he hath given us out of his fulness of *Grace* and *Truth*, *Grace* for *Grace*; and that to be under *Grace* and not under the *Law*, is not to have Liberty to do that now, which ought not to have been done before or to be excused from former moral Obligations, as the *Ranters* interpret it; but

to be Freed from the *Condemnation* of the Law, First through *Remiſſion of the Sins that are paſt* upon Faith and Repentance, and next, by freeing us of that weakneſs by which we were diſabled from keeping Gods Juſt Law and fulfiling the Righteouſneſs of it, in receiving and obeying the *Light* and *Grace* that comes by *Jeſus* Chriſt.

Very pertinent is that Paſſage of the Apoſtle *Paul* (to *Titus*) to our preſent purpoſe, for it ſeems to comprehend the *End* of *Chriſt's Coming*, and the Faith and Duty of his People; which our Great *Selden*, after all his Painful Readings and Curious Inquiſitions, ſaid, but a little before his Death, was the *Moſt-Weighty Paſſage of the whole Bible to him, as the Bible was the beſt of Books in the World*, viz:

Tit. 2. 11. 12, 13, 14.

For the Grace *of* God, *that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts we ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World; looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of the Great God and our Saviour* Jeſus *Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from* all *Iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, Zealous of Good Works.*

In which Comprehenſive Paſſage we find the *End* of *Chriſt's Coming* to be Our *Redemption from all Iniquity*, both to blot out our *Sins* that are paſt, and to purify our Hearts from the *Sin* that remains. We have the *means* that works and brings this Salvation into our Souls, which is the *Grace*; and the *Way* by which this *Grace* doth accompliſh it, is by *Teaching us to deny Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and to live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World.*

World. Which has this great Encouragement joyned to it, that those who so live, have only right to look for that blessed Hope and the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Savious *Jesus* Christ.

I will add the Testimony of his Beloved Disciple *John*, who has defined to us the *End* of *Christ's Coming* thus: *Whosoever committeth* Sin, *Transgresseth also the Law; and ye Know, that he was manifested to* take away our *Sins.* And to shew that this is understood, not only of the *Guilt* of Sins past, but of the *Nature* and present Power of Sin in Man, observe what follows; *Whosoever abideth in him* (Christ) **Sinneth not.** As if this Apostle had foreseen the present Mischief *Christianity* labours under both on the side of Evil Men, and but too many Mistaken *Professors*; he adds, *Little Children, let no Man* deceive *you*; *he that doth Righteousness is Righteous, even* as he is Righteous; *he that* committeth Sin *is of the* Devil, *for the* Devil sinned *from the Beginning.* [Now comes his most express Passage to the Matter in hand] *For this purpose the* Son *of* God *was manifested, that he might* **Destroy** *the* Works *of the* Devil: Which is more than the *Remission of Sins* that are *past*; here is the **Destruction** of the Power and Kingdom of *Satan.* They that know not this, know not Christ as he should be known, not savingly. For as we, so our *Lord* is known by his Fruits, by the *Works* which he works in us: Therefore it is said, that *His own* Works *praise him.* And said Christ, *If I had not done among them the Works which none other man did, &c.* So that he referred to his Works to prove his Nature and Mission.

1 John 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

He therefore that lives in *Sin* denyes *Christ*, by denying the *End* of his *Coming*: The *Fool* did not say, with his Mouth, but *in his Heart, There is no God*; yet but too many now adays plead with their Tongues and Pens, for *Sin Term* of *Life*, by endeavouring to shew the Impossibility of *overcoming Sin*. But what saith this Apostle further of the Business? *Whosoever is born of God*, doth not commit Sin: *In this the Children of God are manifest and the Children of the* Devil, *whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God*; *neither he that* loveth not *his Brother*. *But if you walk in the* Light, *as God is in the* Light, *we have* fellowship *one with another, and the* Blood *of* Jesus *Christ his Son* cleanseth *us from* **all Sin**. *He that saith he abideth in Christ ought himself also* so to walk, even as Christ *walked*. A little lower in the same Chapter he says: *I have written unto you Young Men, because ye are strong, and the* Word *of* God *abideth in you and ye have* **Overcome** *the Wicked One*.

John 15. 24. so ch. 7. 23. 24. and 8. 46.

Chap. 1. 7.

Chap. 2. 6, 14.

I will add one Scripture-Testimony more in the present Case, and it is this: *Herein* (saith *John*) *is our Love made perfect, that we may have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, because* as he is, so are we in this World.

Chap. 4. 17.

Behold now the true *End* of *Christ*'s *Coming*! viz, To **save from Sin** and to purge us from *all Iniquity*; that he might present us to God without Spot or Blemish. Let us not then Flatter our selves, for we shall be the Loosers: Neither let us make that Impossible

Ephes. 5. 27.

possible through our Infidelity, which a Grain of Sincere *Faith* can make not only Possible but Easie. What has been, may be again, nay; in this Case must be. Did the *First* Christians *overcome the Wicked one?* so must the *Last* Christians too. Were those Ages led by the *Holy Spirit* and taught by the *Grace* of *God* to *live God-like*, or like God in the World? so must we of these Latter Ages too, if we will be blest for ever; that having *put off the Old Man*, the Devil and his Works; we may *put on Christ* the new and heavenly Man, the second *Adam*, with his Holy Life and Works; so shall *the Fruits of his Spirit* shine through us, which are *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Patience, Gentleness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance*; *for they that are Christ's have Crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*: They hear his Voice that leads them out of the Concupiscencies of this Vile World, and *they follow him, and he gives unto them Eternal Life, and a Stranger they will not follow.* The World, the Flesh and the Devil make up this Stranger, and those that are carried away by this Stranger are in an Unreconciled State to God, and, so dying, must inevitably perish. Well, then will we be true Christians? Have we *Faith*? then let us take the Advice of that good man *Peter*; *Let us add to our Faith* Virtue, *and to Virtue* Knowledge, *and to Knowledge* Tempreance, *and to Temperance* Patience, *and to Patience* Godliness, *and to Godliness* Brotherly-Kindness, *and to Brotherly-Kindness* Charity: For says he, *if these things*

Rom. 13. 14. Ephes. 4. 22.

Gal. 5. 22, 23, 24.

John 10. 4. 5, 27.

2 Pet. 1. 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

be in *you and* abound, *they make you, that ye ſhall neither be* barren *nor* unfruitful *in the Knowledge of our Lord* Jeſus *Chriſt. But he that lacketh theſe things is* blind, *and cannot ſee far off, and hath* forgotten *that he was purged from his Old Sins. Wherefore the rather Brethren, give Diligence, to make your* Calling *and* Election ſure; *for if ye do theſe things, ye ſhall* never *fall. For ſo an* Entrance *ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly into the* Everlaſting Kingdom *of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Thus much, O ye* Proteſtants! *that profeſs a* Reformation, *and value your ſelves upon it, Of the true* Reformed *Doctrine of* Godlineſs, *a virtuous and good Life, without which your profeſſion will be the aggravation of your Guilt. For know this once for all, that a true Reformation lies in the* Spirit of Reformation, *reforming the* Minds *and* Manners *of ſuch as profeſs it. God Almighty open the Eyes and affect your hearts with this great Truth.*

The *Fourth* Great *Eccleſiaſtical Evil*, is *Preferring* Humane Authority *above* Reaſon *and* Truth.

THis and the next *Evil*, which is the Laſt now to be conſidered, to wit, *Propogation of Faith by Force, Religion by Arms,* are the *Two Legs* upon which the *falſe Church* hath in all Ages ſtood. Under this degeneracy we find the *Jewiſh* Church at Chriſt's coming, and he complains of it, *Ye teach*

for

for Doctrines the Traditions of men, ye seek to kill me, a man that has told you the Truth: But I challenge the whole Account of *Time*, and *Records* of the World which are come to the hands of this Age, to tell me *When, where* and *by whom* these Principles have been received, improved and used, in any sort of Proportion or Comparison, with the Practice of that Church, which has long prided her self in the name of *Catholick* and *Christian*. And yet I could wish nothing of these *Two Ill Principles* had found any place amongst *Us*, that call our selves **Protestants**; though to the great Men of her Communion, in divers Countries of *Europe*, is cheifly owing most of that *Ignorance, Superstition, Idolatry, Persecution* and *Blood-shed* that have been among *Christians*, since the Christian Profession hath grown to any Power in the World. I shall consider them severally, respecting us, and in their due Order, with as much Brevity, as well I can. Mat. 15. 9. Joh. 8. 40.

That **Humane Authority** hath been *preferred above Reason and Truth*, that is, That the *Apprehensions, Interpretations, Conclusions* and *Injunctions* of Men have been reputed the great *Necessaries* or *Essentials* to Salvation and *Christian* Communion, insomuch as a Sober and Reasonable Dissent hath been too often over-rul'd, not by Weight of *Argument* or Evidence of *Truth*, but by the Power and Numbers of Men in Ecclesiastical Office and Dignity, is, and speak Modestly, in a large Degree true among us. The *First Church-Evil* reprehended in this Discourse, may begin the Proof, and give the first Witness upon this part of the

Charge, viz. *That* **Opinions** *have been made* **Articles** *of Faith*; *that is*, the **Constructions** *and* **Conclusions** *of* **Men** *from Sacred Writ, and not the* **Text** *it self, have been enjoyn'd and impos'd as* **Essential** *to Eternal Salvation and External Christian Communion.* Insomuch as no *Reason*, *Scripture* or purest *Antiquity* hath been suffered to prevail against such Determinations, and too often not enough to excuse those that have pleaded for a *Conscientious Dissent* from them; the Authors of them either resting upon the Authority of their own Judgments, or conforming themselves to the Example of Ages less pure and clear.

I Conscientiously refuse to name *Parties*, because I am tender of giving the least Offence; but upon a Just Observance of those Revolutions of Protestancy that have been amongst us, we may see, with what Stiffness, not to say *Obstinacy*, several **Models** of *Religion* and **Draughts of Creeds** have been contended for. I would beseech every *Party*, in Christ's Name, to look into it self; for I don't, because such are best able (if they will be Impartial and put no Cheat upon themselves) to make the Application of what I say. However, I will name those Points, about which the Authority of Man, as it seems to me, has been so positive. Of *God*, as to his *Prescience* and *Predetermination*: Of *Christ*, as to his *Natures* and *Personality*, and the *Extent* of his Death and Intercession: Of *Free-Will* and *Grace*: Of *Faith* and *Works*: Of *Perseverance* and *Falling away*: Of the Nature and Power of the *Church*: And Lastly, of the *Dignity* and *Power* of the *Clergy*.

And

And if Men pleaſe but to lay their Hands upon their Hearts, and caſt their Eyes upon the Scriptures; if they will but uſe the *Light* that God has afforded them, and bring ſuch Debates and Reſults to the *Test* of that Light and the *Sound Form* of *Words*, the *Holy Ghoſt* hath uſed and preſerv'd amongſt us, I need not take the Employment upon me of pointing to *Humane Authority* among the ſeveral *Parties* of *Proteſtants*, as to theſe points, ſince nothing will be clearer. For it is about the *Meaning* of this and the *Intention* of that place of Scripture the Conteſt hath been and ſtill is; and how to maintain and propagate thoſe Conceits: So that the falling out is in the Wood of our own Opinions, and there the Contention is kindled, that conſums all about our Ears. A moſt unwarrantable Curioſity and Nicety, for the moſt part, that had more influence upon our Paſſions, then our Practice, which is uſually the worſe in point of Charity, and not the better for them in any thing. O that we would but be impartial and ſee our own *over-plus* to the Scriptures, and retrench that redundancy, or keep it modeſtly! for 'tis an horrid thing that we *Proteſtants* ſhould aſſume a Power of *ranging* our human apprehenſions with the Sacred Text, and injoining our *Imaginations* for *Indiſpenſible* Articles of *Faith* and *Chriſtian Communion*.

But the next proof of the prevalency of *Humane Authority* amongſt us *Proteſtants*, is *The great* Power *and* Sway *of the* Clergy, *and the* Peoples Reliance *upon them for the Knowledge of* Religion, *and the Way of* Life *and* Salvation. This is ſuch plain Fact, that every *Pariſh* more or leſs proves it. Is

not

1 Cor. 14. not *Prophecy*, once the Churche's, now engroſt by them and wholly in their hands? Who dare publickly *preach* or *pray*, that is not of that *Claſs* or *Order*? Have not they only the *Keys* in keeping? May any body elſe pretend to the Power of *Abſolution* or *Excommunication*? much leſs to conſtitute *Miniſters*? Are not all *Church Rites* and *Priviledges* in their Cuſtody? Don't they make it their proper Inheritance? Nay, ſo much larger is their *Empire* then *Caſars*, that only they begin with *Births* and end with *Burials*: Men muſt pay them for *Coming* in and *Going* out of the World. *To pay for dying* is hard! Thus their *Profits* run from the *Womb* to the *Grave*, and that which is the *Loſs* of others, is their *Gain*, and a part of their Revenue. Both Lives and Deaths do bring Grice to their Mill, and Toll to their Exchequer, for they have an Eſtate in us for our Lives, and an *Heriot* at our Deaths.

'Tis of this great *Order* and *Sept* of Men only, that all *Synods* and *Convocations* are, of modern Ages, compounded; and what they determin, is called the *Canons* or *Decrees* of the *Church*; though, Alas! She is only to *Obey*, what they of the Gown *Ordain*; giving us thereby to underſtand, that they want the *Authority* of her *Name*, where they deny her to have a part, or to be preſent.

But they have not only been the Uſual *Starters* of *new Opinions*, and the great *Creed-Makers* among Chriſtians, but the *Sway* they have long had with the *People*, makes them ſo Conſiderable an *Intereſt* in the Eyes of the *Civil Magiſtrate*, that he often finds it not for his Safety to diſoblige them. Upon this it is, we ſee them ſo Succeſsful in their Solicita-

Solicitations of *Publick Authority* to give Its *Sanction* to their *Opinions* and *Forms*; and not only recommend them (which goes certainly a great way with the People) but impoſe their *Reception*, and that on ſevere *Penalties*: In ſo much, that either Men muſt offer up their underſtandings to their Fears, and *diſſemble Conviction* to be ſafe, or elſe periſh: There is no medium. Something of this lies near us: God Almighty open our Eyes to ſee both the Truth and Miſchief of this thing.

But what ſhall I ſay of that *Implicit Reverence* the people have for the *Clergy* and dependance upon them about *Religion* and *Salvation*; as if they were the only *Truſtees* of Truth, and high *Treaſurers* of *Divine Knowledge* to the *Laity*: And we daily ſee, that the blind Opinion they have of their *Office* (as that which is peculiar to that order, and not common to Chriſtians, be their *Gifts* as they will) diſpoſes them to rely entirely upon their Performances. The *Miniſter* is *Chooſer* and *Taſter* and every thing for them: They ſeem to have deliver'd up their Spiritual ſelves, and made over the buſineſs of Religion, the *Rights* of their *Souls* to their *Paſtor*; and that ſcarcely with any *Limitation* of Truſt too: And as if he were, or could be their *Garanté*, in t'other World, they become very inſolicitous of any further *Search* here. So that if we would examine the reſpective *Pariſhes* of *Proteſtant* as well as *Popiſh* Countries, we ſhall find and it is, come to that ſad paſs, that very few have any other *Religion* then the *Tradition* of their *Prieſt*. They have given up their Judgment to him, and ſeem greatly at their Eaſe, that they have diſcharged themſelves of the trouble of

Work-

Working out their own Salvation and Proving all things, that they might hold fast that which is good. And in the room of that care bequeath'd the charge of those Affairs to a *Standing Pensioner* for that purpose.

Thus the *Clergy* are become a sort of *Mediators* betwixt Christ and us, that as we must go to *God* by *Christ*, so must we come to *Christ* by *them*: They must be, it seems, like the *high Priests* under the *Law*, who only enter'd into the *Holy of Holies*; whose *Lips preserved Knowledge*; and by them we must understand the *Divine Oracle*. As if the Mysteries of *Salvation* were not to be intrusted with the *Vulgar*; or that it were a kind of *Prophanation* to expose them to their *View*, and the only way to make them *cheap* and *contemptible* to suffer *Every Christian* to have the keeping of them; though they belong to *every Christian*. But this Language, thanks be to God, is that of *humane Authority* that would magnify the *Mysteries* of *Salvation* by the Ignorance of those that should know them, as if the *Gospel-dispensation* were not that of full Age, but *Infancy* or *Minority*.

'Tis true, the State of people under the *Law* and the *Levitical Priest-hood* is called a state of *Bondage*, *Childhood* and *Minority*, and the Law there-
Gal. 3. fore is term'd a *School-master* to bring us to Christ; but it is as true, that the State of Christianity is reputed the Age of *grace*, *freedom*, *manhood* and *Inheritance* by the same Apostle: And that we should have external *Guardians* of our *Faith* and *Religion* upon us after we are come to *Years* of *Discretion*, that might be very allowable under the feeble State of our Minority,

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is not to obtain greater *Freedom*, but to make our Case worse. For it is more tolerable to be used as *Children* when we are *Children*, and know nothing above that Condition, then when *riper Years* have brought us to the Understanding and Resentment of *Men*. But it is almost as unpardonable as it is unsufferable, to make that *Infancy* the Perfection of the *Christian-Religion*, as if there were nothing *beyond wearing a Bib and being fed, carried and govern'd as* Nurses *please*; that is, *as the* Priests *will*. It is a Knowing and *Reasonable*, and not a blind *Obedience*, that commends a *Man: Children* should be ruled, because they have not so ripe an Understanding or Choice; but because 'tis not so with *Men*, *Reason* ought to conduct them in their Duty, that the Service they preform to God, may be such as the Apostle calls a *Reasonable* one; The *Will* is no longer *Will* if not *Free*, nor *Conscience* to be reputed *Conscience*, where it is compelled. The *Gospel* is not the time of Ceremonial Works but of *Faith*, therefore not Coercive, because out of our own power; it is the *Gift* of *God*.

But though this be very unhappy, that so excellent a Reformation, founded upon the freest Principles of Inquiry, common to all that had Souls to save, should so miserably degenerate into *Formality* and *Ignorance*, *Implicit Faith* and *blind Obedience*; yet that part of our History is most lamentable to me, where we find the *Noble Bereans*, the diligent Inquirers; People that desire to *prove all things*, that they may *hold fast that which is good*; such as would see with their own Eyes, and that dare not transfer the right of Examination of points that so nearly concern their Immortal Souls to any mortal

tal man; but who desire to make their *Faith* and *Religion*, the *Faith* and *Religion* of their *Conscience* and *Judgment*, that on which they dare depend and rest their *eternal Happiness* in the Day of *Judgment*: That these, I say, should instead of being cherisht, be therefore *exposed to the Displeasure of the* Clergy, *the* Scorn *of the Rude Multitude, and the Prosecution of the* Civil Magistrate, has some thing in it, I confess is harsh and anxious to remember, and I only do it for this purpose, that it may put us in mind of our great Declension from *Primitive Protestancy*, and how much *Humane Authority* has crept into the Affairs of *Religion* since that time of theday, when we made it a prime Article of our *Protestant Creed* to reject and renounce it.

And that you may yet see your selves short of your own Pretences, if not contrary to your express *Principles*, and how much you have narrow'd your selves from the use of your *First Principle*; let us Suppose a *Turk* is convinced, that Christ is that, which he believed *Mahomet* to be, the *Greatest of all Prophets*, That *Mahomet* was an Impostor, That *Jesus* is the only Saviour and Mediator; but being Catechistically taught the *Two Natures* in one Person, the *Hypostatical Union*, in fine, the *Athanasian* Creed and other *Articles* of *Faith*, or *Rites* of your Church, not so clearly express'd in Scriptures, nor easily apprehended or assented to, will not this poor Creature be looked upon either as *Infidel* or *Heretick*, and renounced all share in Christ and Christian Fellowship, because his Weakness or Understanding will not allow him to come up to the full Inventory of Articles believed and imposed by you? Certainly you must either be partial, and give him

that

that Liberty you deny to Perſons of equal Tenderneſs, or elſe you muſt, after your preſent ſtreightneſs, conclude him Infidel or Heretick, tho' he believe one God, Chriſt to be the only Mediator, the Gift of the Spirit, the neceſſity of Holineſs, Communion and Charity. But I would beſeech you that we may conſider if this bears any Proportion with the Wiſdom and Love of God, in ſending Chriſt into the World to ſave you and me?

The Apoſtle *became All unto all to win ſome*; but this is *becoming All unto none, to force all*: He thereby recommends the *Utmoſt Condeſcention* that can be lawful; but this uſe of *Humane Authority* about ſeems to make it unlawful to Condeſend: As if Faith *Force* were better than *Love*, and *Conformity*, however it become at, than *Chriſtian Condeſcention*.

The Bleſſed Apoſtle had his Eye to the *Good Intention* and *Sober Life* of the Weak; and uſed an holy ſort of Guile to catch them: He ſeems, as if he diſſembled the Knowledge of thoſe *Averſe Opinions* which they held, or the neceſſity of their embracing thoſe Doctrines, which as yet they might not believe. He fell not to Debate and Canvaſs Points in Difference between them, which inſtead of Union would have enflam'd the Difference and rais'd Contention: No, no, He *became all unto all*, that is, He ſtoop'd to all Capacities, and humbled himſelf to thoſe Degrees of Knowledge that men had, and valued that which was good *in all*; and with this Sweetneſs he practiſed upon them to their futher proficiency in the School of Chriſt. Theſe Allurements were all his Injunctions;

ons? nay, in this Case he makes it an Injunction to use no other: *Let us therefore* (says he) *as many as be perfect be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be* **Otherwise** *minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.* Which is to say, You shall not be impos'd upon, stigmatiz'd or excommunicated for Want of Full Satisfaction, or because you do not Consent before Conviction; for *God shall* **Reveal** *it to you*; you shall see and know what you do, and to God you shall owe your Knowledge and *Conformity*, and not to *Humane Authority* and *Imposition*: Your Faith shall not be implicit, nor your Obedience blind, the Reason of your Hope shall be in you. Phil. 3. 15.

Pray let us compare this with the *Language* of our own Times, where because People cannot come up to the Prescriptions of men, but plead the Liberty of Dissent, though with never so much Sobriety and true Tenderness of Conscience, they are upbraided after this manner; *Are you Wiser than your* Superiours? *Were our* Fore-Fathers *out of the Way? Did no body know the* Truth *till* you *came? Are you Abler than all our* Ministers *and* Bishops *and your* Mother *the* Church? *Cannot it content you to* believe as she *believes? Is not this* Pride *and* Presumption *in you, a Design to make and head* Sects *and* Parties? with the like Entertainment.

Now this is that which you your selves, at least in the Persons of your Ancestors, have stiled **Popery**; yea, **Popery** in the abstract; to wit, **Implicit Faith** and **Blind Obedience**: If so? then say I, let us also have a care of *Popery* in *Protestant* guise, for that *Popery* is likely to do us most

Injury

Injury that is leaſt ſuſpected. I beg you, by the Love of God and Truth, and as you would lay a ſure Foundation of Peace here, and eternal Comfort to your own Souls, that you would conſider the Tendency of upbraiding and violently overruling the *Diſſent* of Conſcientious and Peaceable People: For if you will Rob me once of the Liberty of my Choice, the Uſe of my Underſtanding, the Diſtinction of my Judgment, no Religion comes amiſs; indeed it leads to No-Religion. It was the Saying of the Old *King* to the then *Prince* of *Wales* and our preſent *King*; *Make the Religion of your Education the Religion of your Judgment*: which to me is of the Nature of an *Appeal* from his *Education* to his *Judgment* about the Truth of his Religion that he was Educated in: And that *Religion* which is too tender to be examin'd is unſound: *Prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good*, lies as an Impeachment againſt Impoſition, deliver'd upon Record by the Apoſtle *Paul* in the Name of the *Holy Ghoſt*. 'Twas the ſame Apoſtle that commended the *Bereans* of Old, for that *they diligently ſearched the Scriptures*, whether thoſe things, delivered by the Apoſtles concerning the *Meſſiah*, were true.

Nay Chriſt himſelf, to whom all power was given in Heaven and in Earth, ſubmitted himſelf to the *Teſt*: He did not require them to believe him, becauſe he would be believed; he refers them to the Witneſs that God bore to him: *If I bear Witneſs of my ſelf, my Witneſs is not true.* He alſo ſends them to the Scriptures; and pleads the Truth of his Authority from that of his Doctrine

John 5. 31, 32, 37, 39.

Ch. 15. 24. *Doctrine* and *Miracles*: *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did.* And finally challenges them to convince him but of *one* Sin: *Which* Ch. 8. 46. *of you convinceth me of Sin? and if I say the Truth, why do ye not believe me?* He offers to reason the Matter, and submit himself to the Judgment of Truth, and well he might, who was Truth it self.

But an **Imposing Church** bears Witness of her self, and will be both Party and Judge: She requires Assent without Evidence and Faith without Proof, therefore false: Christian Religion ought to be carried on only by that way by which it was introduced, which was **Perswasion**; *If any Man will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross and follow me:* And this is the Glory of it, that it does not destroy, but fairly conquer the Understanding.

I am not unacquainted with the Pretences of *Romanists* to *Abnegation*, to a Mortified and Self-denying Life, and I do freely acknowledge, that the Author of the *German Theology*, *Taulerus*, *Thomas a Kempis*, and other Misticks in that Communion, have written Excellent Practical Things, but there is scarcely any thing of this Violent *Popery* in those Tracts: On the contrary, the very Nature and Tendency of them is Diametrically Opposite to the compulsary Spirit and Constitution of that Church, and all others that practice Imposition in Religion whatever name they walk under.

And as it is one great Mark of the false Church to pervert the right End of True Doctrine, so hath she excelled in the Abuse of that Excellent Word

Word **Self-Denyal**: For ſhe hath tranſlated it from *Life* to *Underſtanding*, from Morals to Faith; *Subjugare intellectum in Obſequium fidei*, to ſubject the Underſtanding to the Obedience of Faith, is the perpetual Burden of their Song, and Concluſion of their Conferences. But what is this *Faith?* That which conquers the World and purifies the Heart? By no means: But 'tis to believe that the Church of *Rome* is the *True Church*, and the *Pope* Chriſt's *Vicar*, and the *Viſible Head* of that Church.

Thus that *Self-denyal*, which relates to our *Wills* and *Affections* in a a corrupt State, they apply to the Uſe of our Underſtanding about Religion; as if it were the ſame thing to deny that which we underſtand and know to be the will of God that we ſhould deny, (which is the *Chriſtian Self-denyal*) and to deny that very *Knowledge* and *Underſtanding* which is God's Gift and our Honour. Whereas *Religion* and *Reaſon* are ſo Conſiſtent, that *Religion* can neither be underſtood nor maintain'd without *Reaſon*: For if this muſt be laid aſide, I am ſo far from being *Infallibly* aſſured of my Salvation, that I am not capable of any Meaſure or diſtinction of Good from Evil, Truth from Falſhood. Why? I have no underſtanding, or at leaſt, not the uſe of any. All the Diſadvantage the *Proteſtant* is under in this, is that of his greater Modeſty, and that he ſubmits his Belief to be tryed, which the other refuſes, under the Pretence of unaccountable Infallibility; to that Authority Reaſon Demurs; right Reaſon I mean; the Reaſon of the firſt 9 Verſes of the firſt of *John*. For ſo *Tertullian*, and ſome other ancients as well as modern Criticks give us the word λογος; and this Divine

Reaſon is Sown in all; that Lamp of God which lights our Candle and enlightens our Darkneſs, and is the Meaſure and Teſt of our Knowledge.

So that whereas ſome people excuſe their Embracing of that Religion by urging the *Certainty* that is in it, I do ſay, 'Tis but a *Preſumption*. For a Man can never be *Certain* of that, about which he has not the Liberty of Examining, Underſtanding or Judging: *Confident* (I confeſs) he may be; but that's quite another thing than being *Certain*.

Yet I muſt never deny, but that every Chriſtian *ought to believe as the Church believes*, provided the Church be true; but the Queſtion is, Which is that *true Church*? And when that is anſwered; as a Man may Unlawfully Execute a Lawful Sentence, ſo he may falſly *believe* as the *True Church* believes: For if I believe what ſhe believes, only becauſe ſhe believes it, and not becauſe I am convinced in my Underſtanding and Conſcience of the Truth of what ſhe believes, my Faith is falſe, though hers be true: I ſay, it is not true to me, I have no Evidence of it.

What is this *Church*, or *Congregation* rather (as worthy *Tindal* every where tranſlates it) *but a Company of People agreed together in the ſincere Profeſſion and Obedience of the Goſpel of Chriſt*. Now look what Inducement they *ſeverally* had to believe and embrace the Goſpel and unite into Fellowſhip, that we muſt have to *joyn* with them: For as they made not one another an *infallible* Authority to one another, upon which they firſt embrac'd the Goſpel, neither are we to ground our Belief thereof upon *their Authority joyntly*; but as they had a Rule to believe and commune, ſo muſt we have

the

the *ſame Rule* to embrace their Communion. So that the Church cannot properly be the Rule of my Faith, who have the ſame Faith, and Object for my Faith, that ſhe has. I argue thus,

I muſt believe as the Church believes, that is, I muſt have the ſame Faith the Church has; then I muſt have the ſame Rule, becauſe the Church can be no more the Rule of that Faith, then ſhe can be that Faith of which ſome would make her the Rule. If then the Church has Faith, and that Faith have a Rule, and that ſhe can no more be the Rule of her own Faith, then ſhe can be that Faith it ſelf, it follows ſhe cannot be the Rule of the Faith of her Members, becauſe thoſe Members have the ſame Faith, and make up this Church. For that which is the Rule of the Congregation's Faith in general, muſt reaſonably be the Rule of every Member's Faith that makes up that Congregation, and conſequently of every Member that may hereafter adhere to it. So that to talk of believing as the Church believes, to flowriſh upon that Self-denyal and Humility, which takes all upon Truſt, and revile thoſe with the bittereſt Invectives that are modeſtly ſcrupulous and act the **Tereans** for their Souls (who think that Eaſineſs of Nature and Condeſcention may be better uſed, and in this occaſion ill placed and dangerous) is to put the Knife to the Throat of Proteſtancy; and, what in them lies, to ſacrifice it to implicite Faith and blind Obedience. For it cannot be denyed but that the great Foundation of our Proteſtant Religion is *the Divine Authority of the Scriptures from without us, and the Teſtimony and Illumination of the Holy Spirit within us.* Upon this foot the firſt Reformers ſtood, and made and maintain'd their *Separation* from

Rome, and freely offered up their innocent Lives in Confirmation. With good Cauſe therefore it is the general Conſent of all *ſound* Proteſtant Writers, *That neither Traditions, Councils, nor Canons of any viſible Church, much leſs the Edicts of any Civil Seſſion or Juriſdiction, but the Scriptures only, interpreted by the Holy Spirit in us, give the final Determination in Matters of Religion, and that only in the Conſcience of every Chriſtian to himſelf.* Which Proteſtation made by the firſt publick *Reformers* againſt the Imperial Edicts of *Charles* the fifth, impoſing Church Traditions without Scripture Authority, gave firſt beginning to the Name of *Proteſtant*, and with that Name hath ever been received this Doctrine, *which prefers the Divine Authority of the Scripture and Spirit to that of the Church and her Traditions.* And if the *Church* is not ſufficient *to be implicitly* believed, as we hold it is not, what can there elſe be named of more force with us, but the Divine Illumination in the Conſcience, or Conſcience in the beſt ſence of the Word; then which, God only is greater? But if any Man ſhall pretend that the Scripture judges according to his Conceptions or Conſcience, for other Men, and that they muſt take their Religious Meaſures by the Line of his Direction; ſuch a perſon makes himſelf greater then either Church, Scripture or Conſcience. And, pray, let us conſider if in any thing the Pope is by our Proteſtant Divinity ſo juſtly reſembled to Antichriſt, as in aſſuming Infallibility over Conſcience and Scripture, to determine as he thinks fit; and ſo in effect to give the Law to God, Scripture, Magiſtrates and Conſcience.

1 John 3. 20

Conſcience. To this Proteſtants have without ſcruple, apply'd that to the *Theſſalonians*, *Sitting in the Temple of God, exalting himſelf above all that is called God.* 2 Theſſ. 2. 4.

To check this exorbitancy, the Apoſtle *Paul* demands, *Who art thou that judgeſt another's Servant? to his own Lord he ſtands or falls?* Which ſhoweth, with great Evidence, that Chriſtians of all ſizes, great and ſmall, are but Brethren, and conſequently all Superiority, Lordſhip and Impoſition are excluded: But if there be a Difference 'tis in this, that as Chriſt taught, *He that is greateſt is to be Servant to the reſt*: But what is more oppoſit to a Servant then a Lord, and to Service then Injunction and Impoſition, and that on Penalties too: Here it is that Chriſt is Lord and Lawgiver, who is only King of this inward Kingdom of the Soul. And it is to be noted that the Apoſtle did not write this to a private Brother, or in ſome ſpecial Caſe, but to the Church, as a General and ſtanding Truth, and therefore now as Authentick and Proper as then. And if this be true, I cannot ſee how any, or even the moſt part of the Church, that are ſtill but Brethren to the reſt, of one voluntary Communion and Profeſſion, can with any ſhew of Reaſon impoſe upon them and eſcape the Reproof of this Scripture: For all Societies are to govern themſelves according to their Inſtitution and firſt Principles of Union. Where there is Violence upon this part, *Tyranny and not Order is introduced.* Now ſince Perſwaſion and Conviction began all true Chriſtian Societies, they muſt uphold themſelves upon the ſame free Bottom, *or they turn Antichri-* Rom. 14. 4.

ſtian. I beſeech you here, let us examine our ſelves faithfully, and I am perſwaded that ſomething of this will yet appear amongſt ſome of us, who ſhew great Reverence to that free Name.

But to make good their unreaſonable conceit of *Church Authority*, they object Chriſt's Words; **go tell the Church**, that is, ſay they, *The Church is the rule and guide of Faith; whatever the Church agrees upon and requires your aſſent to and Faith in, that you muſt neceſſarily believe and ſubmit to.* But though, as before, it is confeſt, in a ſence, we muſt believe as the true Church believes, yet not becauſe ſhe ſo believes; but for the ſame reaſons that ſhe her ſelf did and does ſo believe; in that none can truly believe as ſhe believes, but muſt do ſo upon the ſame principles and motives for which they believ'd that firſt made up that Chriſtian Church. To talk of being the *Rule* and *Guide* in point of Faith, is to contradict Scripture and juſtle Chriſt out of the Office which is peculiar to him. He is given to his Church an *Head*, that is, a *Counſeller*, a *Ruler*, a *Judge*, and is called a *Lawgiver*; and ſays the Apoſtle, *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt he is none* of his; and *The Children of God are led by the Spirit of God.* *And he was Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs* to the Church Apoſtolick, and is ſo to his own Church all the World over. Beſides, 'tis abſurd that the Church can be the Rule and Guide of Faith, for as ſuch, *ſhe muſt be her own Rule and Guide, the Faith of the Members being that of the Church*, which cannot be.

Iſa. 9. 6.
Rom. 8. 9. 14.

But what then can be the meaning of Chriſt's Words, *Go tell the Church*? Very well. I anſwer, 'tis

'tis not about *Faith*, but *Injury*, that Chriſt ſpeaks; and the place explains it ſelf, which is this: *Moreover, if thy Brother ſhall* **Treſpaſs** *againſt* **thee**, *go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone.* Matth. 18. 15, 16, 17, 18.

Here is *Wrong*, not *Religion*; *Injuſtice*, not *Faith* or *Conſcience* concerned; as ſome would have it, to maintain their Church power. *If he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three Witneſſes every word may be eſtabliſhed; and if he ſhall neglect to hear them,* **tell it unto the Church**; *but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an* Heathen *man and a* Publican. *Verily I ſay unto you, whatever ye ſhall* Bind *on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever ye ſhall* Looſe *on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven*, &c. The matter and manner of which paſſage, deliver'd by Chriſt, ſhews that he intended not to ſet up *Church power about Faith* and *Worſhip*, unto which all muſt bow, even without, if not againſt conviction. The word **Treſpaſs** and **Fault**, prove abundantly that he only meant private and preſonal Injuries, and that not only from the common and undeniable ſignification and uſe of the word **Treſpaſs** and **Fault**, but from the way Chriſt directs and commands for accommodation, viz. that *the perſon wronged ſpeaks to him that commits the Injury alone*, if that will not do, *that he take one or two with him*; but no man can think that if it related to *Faith* and *Worſhip*, I ought to receive the Judgment of one, or two or three for a ſufficient Rule. This has not been the practice, at leaſt not the Principle of the moſt degenerated Church ſince the Primitive times; for moſt,

moſt, if not all, agree *that nothing below the Church can determine about matters of Faith*, and even many with reaſon cannot go ſo far; I mean as to Injunction and Impoſition. Yet Chriſt ſeems to fix a blame upon him that complies not with the Perſon he has offended, and more if he refuſe to give ſatisfaction, after one or two have alſo entreated him; but therefore it cannot relate to matters of Faith and ſcruples of Conſcience, *but perſonal and private Injuries.* Which is yet clearer from this part of Chriſt's ſaying, viz. *That in the Mouth of two or three Witneſſes every Word may be eſtabliſhed*: Which Implyes a *Tryal* and *Judicial* proceeding, as is cuſtomary in civil caſes, about perſonal and private Treſpaſſes; for it were not ſo proper to ſpeak of Witneſſes on any other account. This is interpreted, beyond exception, by the Apoſtle to the *Corinthians*, where he reproves and forbids them *to go to Law one with another before Unbelievers*; arguing thus; *Do you not know that the Saints ſhall Judge the World, and if the World ſhall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the ſmalleſt matters?* This ſhews the meaning of Church Authority in thoſe dayes, and is a natural Expoſition upon Chriſt's words, in caſe of Treſpaſs and Refractorineſs, *Tell the Church.* And 'tis yet the Practice of all ſober, juſt and quiet People, rather to refer their Controverſies to approv'd men, then to tare one another to pieces at Law.

1 Cor. 6. 1. 2.

But it is worth our notice that as any Deciſion upon an *Arbitration* obliedges only the Parties to ſet down content with that award, be it loſs or gain, which the Arbitrators think equal, as the next beſt way to accommodate differences, and not that ſuch award

award should alter their first Thoughts and Opinion they had of their right, or force them to declare they are of the Arbitrators mind; So is it most unreasonable, where the *Church* is only an *Arbitrator* about *Personal trespasses*, or *Umpire* at most, from thence to imagine a Power to determin and impose Faith, and that upon severe Penalties as well of this World unto which Christ's Church has no relation, as of the other World. I say, this very thing, well weigh'd, breaks all their Fallacies to pieces, and decides the business beyond all contradiction between those that stand upon *the Spirit within and the Scripture without* on the one hand, and such as meerly *rest upon the Traditions of men and Authority of the Church* on the other hand. For if in an Arbitration I am not bound to be of the Arbitrators mind, though for Peace sake I submit to their Award, and that the *Church Power*, in this place controverted, relates only to external and personal Trespasses, Injuries or Injustices, as the place it self plainly proves, there can be no sense, reason or modesty in the Earth, on the part of those high Church-men, from hence to *wring* and *extort the Power* of *defining*, *resolving* and *Imposing upon all people*, *under temporal and eternal punishment*, *Articles of Faith and Bonds of Christian Communion*.

I Conclude this of the *Church* with saying, that 'tis not *Identity of opinion*, but *Justice*, not *Religious Uniformity*, but *Personal Satisfaction* that concerns the Text, and therefore Reason, sober Conscience and good Sense may at any time lawfully insist upon their claim to be heard in all their Scruples or Exceptions without disrespect to that excellent

Doctrine

Doctrine, when rightly underſtood, *Go tell the Church.*

To this, let me add ſomething about this great Word **Church**. Some men think they are ſure enough if they can but get *within the pale of the Church*, that have not yet conſidered what it is. The Word **Church**, ſignifies any Aſſembly; ſo the *Greeks* uſed it: And it is by Worthy *Tindal* every where tranſlated *Congregation*. It has a two fold ſenſe in Scripture. The firſt and moſt excellent Senſe is that, in which ſhe is called the *Body* and *Bride* of Chriſt. In this reſpect ſhe takes in all Generations, and is made up of the Regenerated, be they in Heaven or on Earth, thus *Epheſ.* 1. 22, 5, 23. to 33. *Col.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. *Rev.* 21. 2. Chap. 22. 17. Here Chriſt only can be Head: This Church is waſhed from all Sin; not a *Spot* nor a *Wrinckle* left: Ill men have nothing to do with this Church, within whoſe pale only is Salvation; nor is this Univerſal and truly *Catholick* Church capable of being conveen'd to be told of Wrongs or Treſpaſſes. The other uſe of that Word in Scripture is alwayes referred to Particular Aſſemblies and places, that is the *Church*, which, by Chriſt's Doctrine, is to be told of Perſonal Injuries, and whoſe determination for Peace-ſake, is to be adhear'd and Submitted to: They muſt of neceſſity be the adjacent or moſt contiguou company of Chriſtian Believers; thoſe to whom the Perſons in difference are by external Society and Communion related: And that ſuch private and diſtinct Aſſemblies are called the Church, is apparent from the acts and writings of the Apoſtles: The Church of *Jeruſalem*, *Antioch*, *Corinth*, *Epheſus*, *Smyrna*, *Pergamos*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea*, *Rome*, *Galatia*,

Galatia, *Theſſalonica*, *Crete*, &c. peruſe theſe places, *Acts* 5. 11. and 9. 31. and 11. 22, 26. and 14. 23, 27. *Rom.* 16. 5. 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. and 4. 17. and 14. 4. *Rev* 2. and 3. Chap. By which it plainly appears that the *Univerſal viſible Church*, ſo much bragg'd of for the *Rule* and *Judge* of *Faith*, &c. is an upſtart thing, and like mean Families or ill got Goods, it uſes falſe Heraldry to give it a Title.

For the Apoſtolick Times, to which all others muſt vail, and by whom they muſt be tryed, knew no ſuch conceit: And the truth is, it was firſt ſtarted, when the Pride of one Man made him ambitious, and his Power able to bid for *Headſhip*, *Empire* and *Soveraignty*: It was then needful to his being *Univerſal Head*, that he ſhould firſt have an *Univerſal body*. But ſuppoſe ſuch a Church there were, 'tis utterly Impoſſible that ſuch a Church could be called together in any one place, or at any one time to be told or to determine of any thing: So that yielding the thing by them deſired, it is uſeleſs and impracticable to the ends for which they deſire it. But alas! who knows not that loves not to be blind, that the Church among them is the *Prieſthood?* The few Cunning Men govern the Majority, and intitle their Conceits *the Canons of Chriſt's Church*, to give them entrance and acceptance: And then, humane Power and Force, the Policy and Weapons of this World muſt be employed to back their decrees. And all this comes from the *Ignorance* and *Idleneſs* of the People, that give the Pride and Induſtry of the Clergy an opportunity to effect their deſigns upon them. For ſo mean ſpirited are the People, as to take all upon truſt for their Souls, that would not truſt or take

take from an *Arch-Biſhop* a braſs ſhilling or a ſlit Groat.

'Tis prodigious to think what *Veneration* the *Prieſthood* have raiſed to themſelves by their uſurpt Commiſſion of *Apoſtleſhip*, their pretended Succeſſions, and their **Clink Clank** of extraordinary Ordination. A *Prieſt*, a *God on Earth*, *a Man that has the Keys of Heaven and Hell*; *do as he ſays or be damn'd*! What power like to this? The Ignorance of the People of their Title and Pretences, have prepared them to deliver up themſelves into their hands, like a Crafty Uſurer, that hedges in the Eſtate on which he has a Mortgage; and thus they *make themſelves over in Fee* to the Clergy and become their proper *Patrimony*, inſtead of being their care, and they the true Miniſters or Servants of the people: So that believing as the Church believes, is neither more nor leſs then Rooking Men of their Underſtandings, or doing as ill Gameſters are wont to do, get by uſing falſe Dice. Come, come, Its believing as the *Prieſthood* believes, which has made way for the offence wiſe and good Men have taken againſt the Clergy in every Age. And did the People examine their bottom, the ground of their Religion and Faith, it would not be in the Power of their Leaders to cauſe them to Err. An Implicit Veneration to the Clergy begun the miſery. What, doubt my Miniſter, arraign his Doctrine, put him to the Proof! by no means: But the Conſequence of not doing it has been the Introduction of much falſe Doctrine, Superſtition and Formality, which gave juſt occaſion for Schiſm; for the Word has no hurt in it ſelf, and implies only a Separation, which may as well be right as wrong.

But

But that I may not be taxed with partiallity or upbraided with ſingularity, there are two Men, whoſe Worth, Good Senſe and True Learning I will at any time engage againſt an entire Convocation of another Judgement, viz. *Jacobus Acontius* and *John Hales* of *Eaton*, that are of the ſame mind, who, though they have not writ much, have writ well and much to the purpoſe. I will begin wit *Jacobus Acontius* at large, and do heartily beſeech my Readers to be more then ordinarily intent in reading what I cite of him; their Care and Patience will be requited by his Chriſtian and very acute Senſe.

'It remains that we ſpeak of ſuch Cauſes of the 'not perceiving that a Charge of Doctrine is intro-'duced, as conſiſt in the Perſons that are taught. 'Now they are chiefly two, *Careleſneſs* and *Ignorance*. 'Careleſneſs for the moſt part ariſeth hence, In that 'the people *truſt too much* to their Paſtors; and per-'ſwade themſelves, that they will not ſlip into any 'Error, and that therefore they have ſmall need to 'have an Eye over them, but that they are bound ra-'ther to embrace whatſoever they ſhall hold forth, 'without any curious Examination. Hereunto may 'be added many other buſineſſes, whereunto Men 'addict themſelves: For that Saying is of large ex-'tent, *Where mens Treaſure is, there is their Heart*, and 'that other, *No Man can ſerve two Maſters*. Now, 'how it may come to paſs that after a people hath 'once had a great Knowledge of Divine Truths, the 'ſaid Knowledge may as it were vaniſh away, beſides 'that Cauſe which hath been even now alleadged, 'we ſhall in another place make diſcovery of ſome o-'ther Reaſons. We ſhall for the preſent add only

'this

'this one; that the people themſelves are in a per-
'petual kind of Mutation, ſome daily dying and de-
'parting, others ſucceeding and growing up in their
'ſtead. Whence it comes to paſs, That ſince the
'Change which is made in every Age, is *ſmall*, ei-
'ther the people cannot perceive it, or if they do ob-
'ſerve it, yet they eſteem it not of ſuch moment, as
'to think fit to move any Difference thereabout.
'This thing alſo is of very great force, to keep the
'people from taking notice of a Change in Doctrine,
'when Men ſhall perſwade themſelves, that they are
'not able to judge of matters of Religion, as though,
'*It is*, *It is not*, and other words uſed in Scripture, do
'not ſignifie the ſame which they do in common diſ-
'courſe; or as if nothing could be underſtood without
'ſome great Knowledge in the Tongues and Arts or
'Sciences, and as if the Power of the Spirit were of
'no efficacy without theſe Helps. Whereby it co-
'meth to paſs, that whilſt they think they underſtand
'not even thoſe things which in ſome ſort they do
'underſtand, being expreſſed in moſt clear and
'evident words, they do at length arrive to that
'Blockiſhneſs, that they cannot underſtand them in-
'deed; ſo that, though they have before their Eyes
'a Sentence of Scripture ſo clear, that nothing can
'be more evident, yet if they to whoſe Authority
'they in all things ſubject themſelves, ſhall ſay any
'thing point blanck oppoſite thereuto, they will
'give credit unto them, and imagine themſelves not
'to ſee that which they ſee as clear as the Light.
'And by theſe means verily it comes to paſs, that
'when the Doctrine of Religion is corrupted, the
'Mutation is not diſcovered. Furthermore, when
'the Doctrine is once begun to be changed, it muſt
'needs

'needs be, that out of one Error another ſhould 'ſpring and propagate infinitely; and God, for Juſt 'Reaſons of his own, blinding them, men bring up-'on themſelves ſo great Darkneſs, and ſlip into ſuch 'foul Errors, that if God of his Mercy open a mans Eyes, and let him ſee thoſe Errors he lives in, he 'can ſcarcely believe himſelf, or be perſwaded 'that he was ever enveloped with ſuch blind Errors. 'Which thing is as true, and as well to be ſeen in 'Men of greateſt Learning and Experience. If thou 'ſhalt thorowly peruſe the writings of ſome of the 'School-men (as they call them) thou ſhalt in ſome 'places meet with ſo much Acuteneſs, as will 'make thee admire: Thou ſhalt ſee them often-'times cleave a fine Thred into many parts, and 'accurately Anotomiſe a Flea, and a little after 'fall ſo foully, and avouch ſuch Abſurdities, 'that thou canſt not ſufficiently ſtand amazed: 'wherefore we muſt obey that Advice of the 'Poet;

Principijs obſta, ſero medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras,

Reſiſt betimes; that Med'cine ſtayes too long,
Which comes when Age has made the Grief too ſtrong

'Now there is need of a double Caution; *viz.* 'That there be no Change made in the Doctrine, 'when it is pure: And if any Change be made, that 'there be notice taken of it. Now look what Change 'is made in this kind, all the Blame is laid upon thoſe 'whoſe Office it is to inſtruct the People: For though

'themselves are the Authors of the Change, yet 'will the People impute it to the Ministers Sleepi-'ness, and want of Care at least. It concerns there-'fore the Pastors and Teachers to be Eagle-eyed, 'and to be very well acquainted with those Causes 'whereby the Change of Doctrine becomes undisco-'vered, and to have them at their Fingers ends, and 'to be wary that on no hand they may miscary. 'Now it will be an excellent Caution for the keep-'ing of Doctrine pure, if they shall *avoid all Curi-'ous* and Vain Controversies: If they shall set be-'fore their Eyes the scope and end of all Religious 'Doctrine, and likewise a Series or Catalogue of 'all such things as make to the attainment of that 'End (of which we formerly spake;) if they shall 'affect, not only the Matter it self, but also, the 'words and phrases which the Holy Ghost in Scrip-'ture makes use of, and exceedingly suspect all dif-'ferent forms of speaking. Not that I would have 'them speak nothing but *Hebraisms*; for so their 'Language would not be plain nor intelligible: but 'I wish that they would shun all such Expressions, as 'have been invented by overnice Disputants, be-'yond what was necessary to express the sence of the '*Hebrew* and *Greek*, and all those Tenets with men 'by their own Wits do collect and infer from the 'Scriptures. Now of what Concernment this will 'be, we may gather by this Instance; The *Papists* 'think it one and the same thing to say, *The Church 'cannot err*, and to say in the words of our Lord, '*Where soever two or three shall be gathered together in my 'Name, there will I be in the midst of them.* Yet is 'the Difference very great, which may thus ap-'pear, forasmuch as in case any one shall conceive

'the

'the Church to be the Pope, Cardinals, and Biſhops 'anointed by the Pope; he hearing the aforeſaid 'Sentence, will judge, that whatſoever they ſhall 'decree, ought to be of Force. But if he ſhall ra- 'ther mind the words of our Lord, and ſhall con- 'ſider that thoſe kind of men do regard nothing 'but their own Commodity, Wealth and Domini- 'on; he will be ſo far from ſo underſtanding them, 'that peradventure not being able to allow the 'Deeds and Practices of theſe Men, he will come 'to hope from thoſe words, That if himſelf with 'ſome other good Men, loving God with their whole 'Heart, ſhall come together, and unanimouſly im- 'plore the Aſſiſtance of God, ſhall be better able to 'determine what it is that ought to be believed and 'practiſed for the attainment of Salvation, then if 'they ſhould perſiſt to put their Confidence in ſuch 'Paſtors. Now this Rule, that the words of the 'Scripture ought to be uſed rather than any other, is 'then eſpecially to be obſerved, when any thing is 'delivered as a certain and tryed Truth, or as a Rule 'of Faith or Life, or out of which any other thing 'is to be inferred. For in Expoſitions and Explana- 'tions, as there is need happily of greater Liberty, 'ſo is there leſs Danger if it be taken. For, whenas 'the *Word of God*, and the *expoſition* thereof, are at 'one and the ſame time both together in view as it 'were; there no Man can be ignorant, that the Expo- 'ſition *is the Word of Man*, ſo that *he may reject it*, in 'caſe it ſeem impertinent. And look by what means 'a man may hinder the Doctrine of Religion from 'being changed by the ſelf-ſame he may find whe- 'ther it be chang'd or no. Now every man ought 'to compare the Doctrine of that Age wherein he

'lives, with no other Doctrine then that which was 'out of queſtion ſpotleſs, which is the Doctrine of 'the Apoſtles. Wherefore, notwithſtanding that 'in our Age the Goſpel is as it were revived, yet 'ought not any man thus to think, that he ought 'to examine whether the Goſpel hath not loſt any of 'that Purity whereunto it had at this time arived; 'he ought rather to look again and again, whether 'ſome Corruption do not yet remain, whether it 'be not in ſome part as yet not ſufficiently reſto-'ed to its ancient Purity and Luſtre; and confi-'dently perſwade himſelf, That he cannot be (that 'I may ſo ſpeak) ſufficiently ſuperſtitious in re-'jecting every word which is not in the Scriptures. 'Foraſmuch as man will ever be more Wiſe and 'Wary than the holy Spirit, and can very hardly 'forbear to mingle ſomewhat from his own head: 'So that whatever comes from Man, can never be 'ſufficiently ſuſpected. And becauſe a thing will 'be ſo much the better preſerved, by how much 'the greater is the number of thoſe that keep it; the 'people ought often to be put in mind, that both 'the reading of the Scriptures, and the *Care of Re-'ligion belongs not to the Paſtors of the Church only*; but 'that every one that would be ſaved ought to make 'diligent ſearch, whether any Corruption be already, 'or is for the future like to be introduced; and this 'to do no leſs carefully, then if he were perſwaded 'that all beſide himſelf were aſleep: And whatſoever 'is wont to take the common people off from ſuch 'ſtudies, Care muſt be taken that that thing be whol-'ly taken away. Concerning which matter, we ſhall 'more conveniently diſcourſe anon.

'Now, foraſmuch as the profit will be ſmall, if

'ſome

'ſome private Man ſhall obſerve that an Error is 'introduced, unleſs he diſcover the ſaid Error, and 'lay it open: there muſt of neceſſity be ſome way 'how this may conveniently be done. Now there 'cannot be a more fitting way, then that which 'the Apoſtle propounds to the *Corinthians*. *Let two 'or three Prophets ſpeak, and let the reſt judge; 'and if any thing be revealed to him that ſits 'by, let the former be ſilent. For ye may all Prophecy 'one by one, that all may learn, and all may be 'exorted.* If ſome one perſon ſhall always ſpeak 'in the Church, and no Man at any time may 'contradict him; it will be a very ſtrange thing, 'if that one Man be not puffed up, if he do not 'fall into ſuch a conceit of himſelf, as to think that 'he is the only Man, that he only hath underſtand-'ing, he alone is wiſe: That all the reſt are a 'company of brute Animals as it were, who ought 'to depend only upon him, and to do nothing but 'learn of him. And if any Man ſhall think, that 'himſelf likewiſe hath ſome ability to teach, he 'will account that Man an hainous offender. But 'what ſays the Apoſtle to this? *Did the Word of 'God come from you? or came it unto you only? If 'any ſeem to be a Prophet, or Spiritual; let him ac-'knowledge what I write unto you to be the commands of 'the Lord. But if any one be ignorant, let him be 'ignorant. Wherefore Brethren, labour that ye may 'Prophecy, and forbid not to ſpeak with Tongues, let 'all things be done decently, and in order.* It is 'exceedingly to be lamented, that this cuſtom, 'and the practice of this command of the Lord, is 'not again reſtored into the Churches, and brought 'into uſe. But ſome Men may ſay, Such is the raſh-

1 Cor. 14.

'neſs of this Age of ours, ſuch the boldneſs, ſuch 'the impudence, That if it were allowed to every 'one to ſpeak in the Congregation, there will be no 'end of Brawls and Contention. Why ſo? Is a 'man another kind of Creature now, then what he 'was of Old? Thou wilt ſay, he is. For mankind 'hath continually degenerated, grown worſe and 'worſe, and ſeems now to have attained the top of 'Corruption. Is it ſo indeed? But, ſuppoſe it to be ſo; 'Thou that art the Teacher of the people, art not 'thou alſo thy ſelf made of the ſame Mold? Art not 'thou born in the ſame Age? In aſmuch as this 'ordinance principally was intended to keep Paſtors 'within the bounds of modeſty; that they may un-'derſtand, That they are not the authors of the 'Word of God, that they have not alone received 'the Spirit: By how much the more mankind hath 'degenerated, by ſo much the greater need is there 'thereof; for that there is now more Raſhneſs, 'Arrogance, Pride, then of Old; this is true, as 'as well of the Paſtors and Teachers, as of the reſt 'of the people. Art thou a Prophet, haſt thou 'any portion of the Spirit? If thou haſt not, ſo 'unfitting, it is, that thou alone ſhouldſt ſpeak in 'Congregation, that there will hardly be found any 'that deſires rather to be ſilenc't, then thy ſelf. But 'if thou art a Prophet, if thou haſt the Spirit, mark 'what the Apoſtle ſays, *Acknowledge* (quoth he) 'that thoſe things which I write, are the Commandments 'of the Lord. Go to then, On the one ſide we have 'the judgment of our Lord, willing that Prophe-'cy (for this is a Word that we are obliged to, 'uſe) ſhould be common to all, and that not for the

'Deſtruction,

'Deſtruction, but the Salvation of the Church: On 'the other ſide, we have thy Judgment, who feareſt 'leſt that may breed Contention and Confuſion; 'whoſe Judgment now ought we rather to ſtand to? 'If thou ſhalt conceive we muſt ſtand to thine: con-'ſider what thou aſſumeſt unto thy ſelf, and what 'will become of thy modeſty. Our Lord, it ſhould 'ſeem, underſtood not what a kind of Creature man 'was; he wanted thy Wiſdom belike, to admoniſh 'him of the danger; or haply he thought not upon 'that Corruption which ſhould befall mankind, 'whereby ſuch a Liberty might prove unprofitable. 'But *Paul* anſwers thee, *That God is not the author of 'Contention, but of Peace*: Who well knowing what 'might move Contentions, what beget Peace, and 'not loving nor willing to have Contention, but 'Peace, willed that this liberty of Prophecy ſhould 'be in the Church. What canſt thou ſay to the 'contrary? What haſt thou to object againſt God 'himſelf, wilt thou accuſe him of indiſcretion? No 'man hath ſo wicked a Tongue, as to dare to do it. 'Yet if thou ſhalt diligently ſearch thine Heart, thou 'ſhalt find there a certain diſpoſition ready to contend 'even with God himſelf: Which motion of thy 'Heart, muſt by no mens be hearkened unto, but 'ſharply repreſſed, and wholly ſubjected to the Spi-'rit of God. It may ſeem peradventure an abſurd 'thing, That after ſome very learned perſon hath 'ſpoken, ſome contemptible perſon ſhall be allowed 'to contradict him. Can ſuch a perſon ſo do with-'out great raſhneſs and temerity? Were I to ſpeak 'according to the judgment of man, verily I could 'not deny it. But if we be really perſwaded, That 'the knowledge of matters Divine, ought not to be

'attributed to our *Watchngs*, Studies, *Wits*, but to
'*God* and to his *Spirit*, wherewith he can in a mo-
'ment endue the ſimpleſt perſon in the World, and
'that with no more labour or difficulty, then if he
'were to give him to one that had ſpent *Neſtors* Age
'in ſtudy: What reaſon is there for me to judge that
'this man does raſhly and unadviſedly, if he ſhall
'ariſe and contradict? Is not the Spirit able to reveal
'ſomewhat to him, which he hath hidden from thee?
'Now, if the Spirit have revealed ſomewhat to him,
'and to that end revealed it that he might contradict,
'that by his means the thing may be revealed to the
'Church; ſhall I ſay that he hath done raſhly in o-
'beying the holy Ghoſt? And if thou think other-
'wiſe, verily thou art not perſwaded that the Spi-
'rit is the Author and Teacher of this Knowledge,
'but that all the praiſe thereof is due to Studies,
'Watchings, and the Wits of men. And if this be
'thy judgment, I tell thee again, that thou art not
'only unworthy to be ſole Speaker, but worthy ra-
'ther to be the only perſon not permitted to ſpeak in
'the Congregation.

'And that thou mayſt the better underſtand,
'that the moſt unlearned ought to be allowed to
'ſpeak, conſider, God will have himſelf to be ac-
'knowledged the Author of his own Gifts: He will
'not have his praiſe attributed unto our Studies or
'Wits, but unto himſelf. But if the man that hath
'ſpent all his Life in ſtudy, ſpeak wiſely, it is not
'attributed to God, but to ſtudy: In word, perhaps,
'it may be attributed to God, yet not without a ve-
'hement Reluctancy of our Judgment; and this is
'that which, I ſay, God will not abide. But if ſo
'be thou ſhalt hear a wiſe word come out of the
'Mouth

'Mouth of ſome unlearned Perſon, thou muſt needs, 'whether thou wilt or no, acknowledge God to be 'the Author thereof. So, when God was minded 'to give unto *Iſrael* a Victory againſt the *Midianites*, 'under the Conduct of *Gideon*; and *Gideon* had ga- 'thered together Thirty Thouſand Men, leſt the '*Iſraelites* ſhould boaſt that they had gotten the Vi- 'ctory by their own Strength, and not by the Aſ- 'ſiſtance of God, (which might have been concei- 'ved, if *Gideon* had fought with ſo numerous an 'Army) he would not ſuffer him to have above 'Three hundred, that it might appear that he was 'the Cauſe of the Victory, and not the Number or 'Valour of thoſe that fought. Now, beſides the 'Glory of God, hereby great Profit does accrue to 'the Church: For if the People ſhall ſee now one 'man, now another, endued with the Spirit, beyond 'all Expectation; many will thereby be encourag- 'ed to hope for the ſame Gift, if they ſhall ask it: 'many will learn and profit; and it will thereby 'come to paſs, that when Occaſion ſhall be to chooſe 'a Miniſter, the Church ſhall not need to call ſtrange 'and unknown Perſons to that Office, but ſhe may 'have of her own ſuch as are fit to be choſen; Men 'whoſe Converſation and Manners are ſufficiently 'known. And when the number of ſuch as are able 'to prophecy, ſhall be great, the Church will not 'be forced to uſe ſuch Paſtors as from their very 'Childhood have propoſed to themſelves ſuch Office 'as the Reward of their Studies; and addicted 'themſelves to the ſtudy of Scripture and Religi- 'on, no otherwiſe then they would have done to 'ſome Trade, whereby they meant in time to 'get their Living: So that a Man can expect but very

'very few of them to prove other then Mercenary 'or Hireling Paſtors.

'Now, that it was the Cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* 'Church, that all might thus Propheſie, 'we may hence conjecture, in that it is 'upon Record, *Luke* 4. how our Lord, '*upon the Sabbath day, according to the Cuſtom, came* '*into the Synagogue, took a Book and expounded a place* '*of* Eſay; and how, *being twelve Years of Age, he* '*ſate at* Jeruſalem *in the Temple among the Doctors,* '*and did Diſpute.* For he could not ſo do by ver- 'ture of any ordinary office, foraſmuch as his Age 'was uncapable, neither did the Doctors know 'who he was. Yea rather, our Lord in ſo doing 'muſt needs make uſe of the power which was 'granted to every one to ſpeak. It remained in 'the *Chriſtians* Congregations untill the times of '*Conſtantine* at the leaſt. Foraſmuch as we have 'theſe words of *Euſebius*, the Writer of 'Church affairs, to that effect: *If any* '*Man inſpired by the Grace of God, ſhould* '*ſpeak unto the People, They all with great ſilence, fixing* '*their Eyes upon him, gave ſuch attention, as if he had* '*brought them ſome errand from Heaven.* So great was 'the reverence of the hearers, ſuch order was ſeen a- 'mong the Miniſters. One after another, another af- 'ter him. Neither was there only two or three that 'Propheſied, according to what the Apoſtle ſaid, but 'to all was given to ſpeak; ſo that the wiſh of *Moſes* 'ſeems rather to have been fulfilled in them, when he 'ſaid, *WouldGod all the People might Prophecy.* There 'was no Spleen, no Envy, the gifts of God were diſ- 'penſed, every one according to his ability, contri- 'buting his aſſiſtance for the confirmation of the 'Church:

Luke 4.

Eccle. hiſt. lib. 9.

'Church: And all was done with love, in ſuch 'ſort, That they ſtrove mutually to honour each 'other, and every one to prefer another before 'himſelf. But to the end this common prophe-'cying may be profitable to the Church, we muſt 'diligently mark what the Apoſtle adviſes. For a 'ſure thing it is, that the Pride of Man is ſo 'great, that whatever hath once fallen from him, 'he will by any means have it ſtand for a Truth; 'neither can he ſuffer that any Man ſhould in-'fringe the ſame. So that if he might be per-'mitted to judge, that laſt ſpake, it will be a Mi-'racle if a Man in his Life time ſhould ſee any 'one give way to him that contradicts him: What 'is *Paul's* advice therefore in this caſe? *Let two 'or three Prophets ſpeak, and let the reſt judge.* He 'will not therefore have the ſame perſons to be 'Parties and Judges. And he adds a little after, '*And the Spirit of the Prophets, is ſubject to the Pro-'phets; for God is not the Author of diſſention, but of 'peace.* So that as ſoon as any Man hath ſpoken 'his own mind, he ought to reſt himſelf ſatisfied 'with the judgment of the reſt, and not obſtinate-'ly to make no end of contending: If this be not 'done, a ſure thing it is; there will be no end of 'ſtrife. But what if any Man will not be content 'to ſubmit to the judgment of the reſt: Verily 'I would avouch, that being ſharply admoniſhed, 'that he diſturb not the Congregation, and that he 'go not againſt the command of the Apoſtle, or 'rather of our Lord, commanding the Spirits of 'the Prophets to be ſubject to the Prophets, he 'ought to be caſt out of the Society, though he 'ſhould hold the prime place in the Congregation.

'The

' The people likewiſe muſt frequently be admo-
' niſhed, that liberty for any one to ſpeak in the
' Congregation, is not therefore granted by the
' Apoſtle, to the end every one ſhould ſpeak what
' comes to his Tongues end, as if he were in a
' Market; but whereas he gives liberty to him
' to ſpeak to whom any thing is revealed, he
' would have all Raſhneſs and Impudence to be
' laid aſide. He that reverences not the Church
' of God, let that Man know, he deſpiſeth the
' Spirit of God, who is Preſident there; and ſhall
' be ſure not to eſcape unpuniſhed. Before a
' Man propounds any thing to the Church, he
' ought to conſider again and again, how ſure a
' manifeſtation he hath of that thing, and what-
' ever the matter be, let him be ſure not to for-
' get a ſober, modeſt, baſhful behaviour, without
' which vertues, doubtleſs no good can be effected.
' But here we muſt attentively conſider, both how
' far a Man ought to ſubmit to the judgment of
' the Congregation, and who may deſervedly be ac-
' counted a troubler of the Church. Verily, I con-
' ceive a Man ought ſo far to give way, as that af-
' ter I have alledged what I had to ſay for my O-
' pinion, if yet the reſt ſhall not allow of my Judg-
' ment, I ought to give over defending of it, and
' ceaſe to be troubleſome to the Congregation con-
' cerning the ſame: But I ought not to be com-
' pelled to confeſs that I have erred, nor to de-
' precate any fault, whiles I do not yet under-
' ſtand that I have erred, for ſo I ſhould ſin a-
' gainſt God. He therefore is a troubler of the
' Church, that will not, ſo far as we have expreſ-
' ſed, ſubmit to the judgment of the Church, but

' goeth

'goeth on to be troubleſome; but eſpecially that 'man who would exact of another that which he 'ought not to do; *viz.* to recant, being not per-'ſwaded that he is in an Error. But thoſe men are 'commonly reputed troublers of the Church, who 'refuſe to ratifie whatever ſhall any wayes fall out 'of the Paſtors Mouthes Again, in this place it 'may reaſonably be demanded, whether, when that 'a matter hath been once or twice debated, and 'ſome men knowing the judgment of the Congre-'gation, would again reduce it into Controverſie, 'he ought to be heard, or enjoyned ſilence, and take 'the matter for determined. But of this we ſhall 'in another place more conveniently diſpute. That 'which remains therefore, is, that we wreſtle with 'God, by daily Prayers, to grant that we may have 'the uſe of this ſo ſoveraign and ſaving liberty, ſo 'profitable to the Church, and that thereby we may 'reap abundance of Fruit. And that he would, to 'that end, break and tame our Spirits with his Spi-'rit, and render them milde and gentle: and not 'ſuffer, what he hath ordained for the confirmation 'and eſtabliſhment of his Church, to be, by the ſtub-'bornneſs and perverſneſs of our Wits and Minds, 'turned to the miſchief and deſtruction thereof. With much more to the ſame purpoſe, too large to be here inſerted.

What I have cited, makes an Apology for doing ſo, needleſs: His whole Book is a moſt accurate account of *Satans Stratagems*, to cauſe and keep up diviſions among *Chriſtians*; deſerving a firſt place with the moſt Chriſtian Writers ſince the Apoſtolical times. He was an *Italian*, of excellent Natural and

and Supernatural endowments, baniſht about *Luthers* time for the Goſpel.

Let us now inform our ſelves of the Judgment of that great Man of our own Country *J. Hales* of *Eaton* in his Treatiſe of the power of the Keys. Upon the matter in hand, viz. 'To your ſecond Query, '*Whether the Keyes were confined to* 'the *Apoſtles only?* The Anſwer is 'in no caſe hard to give, it may perchance, in ſome 'caſe, be dangerous; *for there is a Generation of men* 'in the World, the **Clergy** they call them, who impro-'priate the Keyes unto themſelves, and would be very an-'gry to underſtand, that others from themſelves ſhould 'claim a right unto them. To your Queſtion then, 'no doubt but originally none received the Keyes 'from the Mouth of our Saviour, but the Apoſtles 'only; none did nor ever could manage them with 'that Authority and Splendor, as the Apoſtles did, 'who were, above all, moſt amply furniſhed with 'all things fitting ſo great a Work. For whereas 'you ſeem to intimate, that the preaching Miſſion 'was communicated to others, as the ſeventy two 'Diſciples, as well as the Apoſtles, you do but mi-'ſtake your ſelf, if you conceive that the Keyes of 'the Goſpel were any way committed to them: 'For concerning the Myſteries of Jeſus Chriſt, and 'him crucified for the Sins of the World (wherein, 'indeed, the opening the Kingdom of Heaven did 'conſiſt) They received it not, they knew it not. 'To be the prime Reporters of this, was an honour 'imparted only to the Apoſtles: Yet were they not 'ſo imparted, as that they ſhould be confin'd to 'them.

J. Hales, Of the Keys, pag. 170. 171, 172, 173.

'them. **Every one** that heard and received the 'Light of the saving Doctrine from them, *so far forth* 'as he had understanding in the wayes of Life, had now the 'Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven committed to his 'Power, both for his own and others use. Every one, of 'what State or Condition soever, that hath any occasion 'offered him, to serve another in the wayes of Life, 'Clergy, or Lay, Male or Female, whatever he be 'hath these Keyes, not only for himself, but for the benefit 'of others. For if Natural goodness teach every man, 'Lumen de Lumine, Erranti comiter monstr areviam, '&c. then how much more doth Christian Goodness require of every one, to his ability, to be a 'Light to those who sit in Darkness, and direct their 'steps, who most dangerously mistake their way? 'To save a Soul, every man is a Priest. To whom I 'pray you, is that said in *Leviticus*, Thou shalt not see 'thy Brother Sin, but shalt reprove, and save thy Brother? 'And if the Law binds a Man, when he saw his E'nemies Cattel to stray, to put them in their way; 'How much more doth it obliege him to do the like 'for the Man himself? See you not how the whole 'World conspires with me in the same Opinion? 'Doth not every Father teach his Son, every Master 'his Servant; every Man his Friend? How many of 'the *Laity* in this Age, and from time to time in all 'Ages, have by writing for the publick good, pro'pagated the Gospel of Christ, as if some *secret* 'instinct of Nature had put into mens minds thus 'to do, &c.

To this let me add his Sense of the force of the *Fathers* Authority in the decision of Controversies, and how far the Ancients, whether Fathers or Councils, ought to be interrested in the debates of these

times

times, which may not be improper to the present ſubject, becauſe not a few build upon their bottome, the Clergy to be ſure, that pretend to direct the reſt.

'You ſhall find (ſays he) that all *Schiſms* have crept 'into the Church by one of theſe 'three wayes; either upon matter 'of *Fact*, or matter of *Opinion*, or 'point of *Ambition*. For the firſt; 'I call that matter of Fact, when 'ſomething is required to be done by us, which ei'ther we know, or ſtrongly ſuſpect to be unlawful; 'ſo the firſt notable *Schiſm*, of which we read in the 'Church contained in it matter of Fact; For it be'ing, upon *Error*, taken for neceſſary that an *Eaſter* 'muſt be kept; and upon worſe than Error, if I 'may ſo ſpake, (for it was no leſs than a point of 'Judaiſm, forced upon the Church upon worſe than 'Error, I ſay) thought further neceſſary, that the 'ground for the time of our keeping that Feaſt, muſt 'be the Rule left by *Moſes* to the *Jews*; there aroſe 'a *ſtout* Queſtion, *Whether we were to Celebrate with 'the* Jews, *on the fourteenth Moon, or the* Sunday *fol'lowing*? This matter, though moſt unneceſſary, 'moſt vain, yet cauſed as great a Combuſtion, as 'ever was in the Church, The Weſt ſeparating 'and refuſing Communion with the Eaſt, for many 'Years together. In this *Fantaſtical* Hurry, I can'not ſee, but all the World were Schiſmaticks: 'Neither can any thing excuſe them from that Impu'tation; excepting only this, that we charitably 'ſuppoſe that all Parties, out of Conſcience, did what 'they did.

J. Hales, Tract of Schiſm, p. 201, 202, 203, 204.

'A thing which befell them through the *Ignorance*

'*of*

of their Guides, for I will not ſay their Malice, and that through the juſt Judgment of God, becauſe *through ſloath and* **Blind Obedience** *Men examined not the things which they were taught, but like Beaſts of Burthen patiently couched down & and indifferently underwent whatſoever their ſuperiors laid upon them.* By the way, by this you may plainly ſee the *danger* of our appeal unto Antiquity, for reſolution in Controverted points of Faith, and how *ſmall Relief* we are to expect from thence. For if the diſcretion of the *chiefeſt Guides and Directors of the Church*, did in a Point ſo *trivial*, ſo *inconſiderable*, ſo *mainly fail them*, as not to ſee the Truth in a Subject, wherein it is the *greateſt Marvel how they could avoid the ſight of it*; can we, without imputation of extream groſneſs and folly, *think ſo* **Poor Spirited** *perſons, competent Judges of the Queſtions now on Foot betwixt the Churches*? Pardon me! I know not what Temptation drew that Note from me.

How theſe two worthy Men will come off I can't tell; They have ventured fairly, and yet I think their caſe not hazardus at all. You have them in three points plain. Firſt, *That relying upon the Clergy as Guardians of Truth to the People, and the Peoples not examining the truth of things from them, is not Apoſtolical, but Apoſtatical.* Secondly, *That no Councils or Fathers ought to be the Rule or Judge of our Faith.* Thirdly, *That to ſave Souls every Man is a Prieſt:* That is, the people are interreſſed in the Chriſtian Miniſtry, which is not tyed to Times, Places, Perſons and Orders, as under the Law; but free to all that have obtained Mercy and Grace from God. And therefore *Peter* calls the believers,

1 *Peter* 2. 5, 9. an Holy and *Royal Prieſthood.* So that every Believer is a Prieſt to himſelf under the Goſpel. But all this I have mentioned with deſign, if it be poſſible, to beat men off that ſuperſtitious and dangerous Veneration they carry to the Names of *Church*, *Prieſthood* and *Fathers*; as if they were to be ſaved by them, and not by *Chriſt*, who is the only *Head* and *Saviour* of the true Church, and God over all bleſſed for ever. And truly, when I conſider the *wilde* dependance ſome people have upon the *Church*, whilſt they know not what ſhe is, *and make it a Principle not to Inquire*, I am amaz'd and often ſtruck with horrour to obſerve with what Confidence they expoſe their Souls. This Principle it is, and not *Inquiry*, that makes Men careleſs and unactive about their own Salvation. But let none deceive themſelves, *as they Sow they ſhall Reap*, *Gal.* 6. 5, 7. *Every one muſt bear his own Burden.* 'Tis not to be ſaved to be within the Pale of any viſible Church in the World. That is putting an eternal Cheat upon our ſelves. *Ill things are Ill things*, within or without the pale: That matters not, and as *Sin* can't be *Chriſtened*, nor *Impiety reconciled to Chriſtianity* by no Arts of Men, *So the Wages of Sin will be Death*, *Rom.* 6. 23. eternal Death. To be therefore of the Church, of which Chriſt is Head; the *redeemed*, *regenerated Church of Chriſt*, is quite another thing, then to be of any viſible Society whatever; for in all ſuch Communions there are, but too many, that have no true Title to Chriſtianity. If then that *Immaculate* Church of which Chriſt is head, be made up only of *holy* and *regenerated* Souls throughout the Societies of *Chriſtians*;

Christians; this will administer but little Comfort to those that presume upon their being within the Pale of the visible Church that are without the Pale of Virtue and Holiness.

But to proceed to those Scriptures, that are irreconcilable to *Implicit Faith* and *Blind Obedience*: *He that believeth, hath the Witness* **in himself**: This general Rule respects no Persons: It is the Result of the *Holy Ghost* to all Believers. Such have no need to go to *Rome*, nor *Winefried's* Well, to the *Shrines* of *Saints*, the *Priests*, nor the *Church* for a Proof of their Faith: They have an Evidence nearer home: They have the *Witness* of their *Faith* and the *Reason* of their *Hope* **in themselves**. 1 John 1. 10.

It is true, this is a Private Judge; but (as it happens) 'tis one of the *Holy Ghosts* setting up; of all things, I confess, most destructive to *Papacy*, no doubt; for there is a Judge in every Man, that sincerely believes, to whom he must stand and fall in this and the other World. For (saith the Apostle) *If our Heart condemn us, God is greater then our Heart, and knoweth all things: Beloved, if our Heart condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.* That is, *the Witness in our selves* discharges us: *The Spirit beareth Witness with our Spirits, that we are Children of God* and Sons of the true Church: Not she that hath *fatted* her self with the Flesh of Saints, and died her Garments in the *Blood* of *Martyrs*; who hath *merchandized* in Souls of Men: But of that Church which is Crowned with *Stars*, and Cloathed with the *Sun*, and has the *Moon* under her Feet. A 1 John 3. 20, 21. Rom. 8. 16.

Church of Light and Knowledge, of Understanding and Truth, and not of *Implicite Faith* and *Blind Obedience*: One that tramples upon all Sublunary Glory; and not she that makes her Pretences to Religion a Decoy to catch the Empire of the World.

Of like Tendency is that notable Passage of the Apostle *Paul* to the *Corinthians*; *Examine* 1 Cor. 13. 5. *your selves, whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that* Jesus *Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates*? Here is not a Word of the *Pope* nor an External Judge; no Humane Inquisition or Authority. *Examine your selves, whether ye be in the Faith? Prove your own selves*: But which way shall we do this? by *Christ*, who is the great *Light* that shines in our Hearts to give us the Knowledge of God and our selves: *He that believes in him, has the Witness in himself*; he is no *Reprobate*; *his Heart condemns him not.*

To which I will add another Passage to the same Purpose, in his Epistle to the *Galatians*; Gal. 6. 4, 5. *But let every Man prove his own Work, then shall he have Rejoyceing in himself* **alone**, *and not in another*: **For every Man shall bear his own Burden.** Here Every Man is enjoyned to turn *Inquisitor* upon himself; and the Reason rendred shews the Justice of the thing; because my *Rejoycing* must be in *my self* **alone**, *and not in another.* I *stand* and *Fall* to no Man; such as I sow I must reap at the Hand of God, if *Paul* say true. Mens Pardons are Vain, and their Indulgences Fictions; *For every Man shall bear his own Burden in that great Day of the Lord.* It cannot therefore be Reasonably thought that another Man should have the Keeping of my Understanding

Underſtanding at my Eternal Coſt and Charge, or that I muſt entirely depend upon the Judgment of a Man or Men, who erring, (and thereby cauſing me to err) cannot be damned for me, but I muſt pay their Reckoning at the hazard of my own Damnation.

I am not unacquainted with the great Objection that is made by *Roman Catholicks* and ſome *Proteſtants* too, High *Church-Men* perhaps, That *Love the Treaſon, but hate the Traytor*; That like this part of *Popery*, but hate the *Pope*; viz. *There are Doubts in Scripture, even about the moſt important Points of* Faith: *Some body muſt guide the Weak; there muſt be ſome one Ultimate, External and Viſible Judge to appeal to, who muſt Determine and Conclude all Perſons as to their Doubts and Apprehenſions concerning the Interpretation of* Scripture; *otherwiſe*, So many Men, ſo many Minds; *the* Church *would be filled with Controverſie and Confuſion.*

I Anſwer, *That* the *Scriptures* are made more *doubtful* than they are; by ſuch as would fain preſerve to themſelves the Umpiridge and Judgſhip of their Meaning. I deny it in Point of *Fact*, that Man's Duty is not moſt painly expreſt in all that concerns Eternal Salvation: But 'tis very ſtrange, that when God intends nothing more by the Scriptures, than to reach the Capacities of Men as to things on which their Eternal Salvation depends, that no Book, if ſuch Men ſay true, ſhould be ſo obſcure, or ſubject to ſo many Various, nay Contradictory Conſtructions. Name me one Author, *Heathen*, *Jew* or *Chriſtian*, that ever wrote with

that Obſcurity and ſeeming Inconſtancy, which ſome gladly pretend to find in the Holy *Scripture*, that they might have the Uſe and keeping of them from the *Vulgar*, and make their own Ends by it. Is then every Body's Book to be *underſtood* but God's? Was that writ *not to be underſtood*? In ſhort, one of theſe two things muſt be true; Either that God intended *not to be underſtood*, or *to be underſtood* in what he commanded to be written. If he reſolved *Not to be underſtood*, it had been better there had been nothing writ; for then there had been no doubts about the meaning of it; but if it was his purpoſe *To be underſtood* of Men, it muſt be ſuppoſed, that what he cauſed to be written, was plain enough for Men to underſtand, or he miſt his own Aim and End, and writ it to no purpoſe, which were too low and abſurde a thought of the Infinity Goodneſs and Wiſdom.

If it ſhould be told me, *That it is not denyed but that the Scriptures may be underſtood by ſome body, but not by every body; for that the Great, Viſible Judge muſt needs underſtand them, becauſe it belongs to his Office to reſolve thoſe Doubts, and determine thoſe Controverſies that may ariſe about underſtanding them, but not every one that reads them.*

Anſw. I muſt alſo ſay, that this is not true in *Fact*: For it is ridiculous to imagine, that *Luke* did not make *Theophilus* his own *Judge* in the reading of what he writ to him, or that the Apoſtles in writing to the ſeveral Churches, as *Rome*, *Corinth*, *Epheſus*, *&c.* to whom they directed their Epiſtles, did not intend that they ſhould underſtand what they writ, or that they

they erected any such Officer in the Church, as an *Expounder* of their Epistles to the Assembly to be *necessarily* believed. For we know in those dayes *the People made the Church* they were the κληρος, the **Clergy**, however in came about that it be now *engrossed* into fewer hands; as you may see in the *Greek* of *Peter*: Μηδ' ως κατακυριευοντες των κληρων 1 Pet. 5. 3. which κληρος is translated *Heritage* in all our Bibles. But this is as if the *Priests* only were the Lord's *Heritage*; which can't be, for a Reason obvious to all, namely, that they have long reign'd as Lords over God's Heritage or Clergy; forbid expressly by *Peter*, therefore not the Heritage and Clergy over which they so rule like Lords; by no means. I will say no more but this, 'tis no convincing Proof to me of their Humility. But to shut up this Argument about the Difficulty of Understanding the Scripture and pretended necessity of a Visible Judge; I say, *Whatsoever may be spoken, may be written*; or thus; *Whatsoever a Visible Judge can now say, the holy Penmen by God's Direction might have written*; and what an Omniscient and Omnipotent God did know and could do for Man's Salvation, an **Omnibenevolent** God, that tells us, *he delights not in the Death of one Soul, but rather that he should be saved*, would certainly have done for man. And because God is as *Omnibenevolent* as *Omniscient* and *Omnipotent*, we must conclude he has done it; and 'tis great Presumption, and a mean Shelter to Ignorance or Ambition to raise a credit to Humane Devices, by beating down the true Value of the Scriptures.

They are dark; what follows? *they must not be read*? what follows then? *Why then such Teachers*

may do as they list with the People. But did the *Pharisees*, with their broad Phylacteries, know God's mind better then the Prophets? or could they deliver it clearer? no such matter: It is by the same strange Figure that the School-men know the mind of Christ better then the Apostles, and that the *Council of Trent* can declare Faith more clearly then the holy Ghost in the Scripture hath done; and yet this is the English of their Doctrine that hold to us those *Lights* to read Scripture by; and that would have us search their Canons and Decrees to find out the Mind of the holy Ghost in Scripture.

The Confusions that are pretended to follow such an Inquiry are but the wretched Arts of selfish men, as much as in them lies, to keep Light and Truth out of the World. When the Net was cast into the Sea, there came some good some bad Fish; it was not the Fishers fault they were no better. Inquiry is not to be blamed for the ill use weak or worse men make of it. The *Bereans* might not all believe, though they might all search; for men don't inquire with equal Wisdom, love and good desire: Some seek and find not, Some ask and receive not; therefore must none ask or seek after that which is good? Or because some ask or seek amiss, will it follow that the thing it self is naught? If Superstition, Error, Idolatry and Spiritual Tyranny be detected and Truth discover'd, will it not more then make amends for all that Weakness and Folly some men have brought forth by the liberty of such an Inquiry? The Enemies of Light may be as Rhetorical as they please upon the excess or presumption of some, bolder then wise, and more Zealous then Knowing, but if they had

James 4.3.

nothing

nothing to loſe by the diſcovery, they would never be the Enemies of a Chriſtian *Search*. It is to be fear'd ſuch get that Obedience and Subjection by a blind devotion, which no man could yield them upon better Information; and is it reaſonable that men of that Stamp ſhould ſecure their Empire by the Ignorance of the People? Ignorance ought to be the Mother of Devotion with none but thoſe that cannot be devout upon better terms: It is the glory of a man that he is Religious upon Reaſon, and that his Duty and Sacrifice are not blind or forc'd, but free and reaſonable. Truth upon Knowledge, though vext with Schiſm, Lev. 22. 18, 29. wiſe and good men will chuſe before Ignorant Religion and all its Superſtitious effects with Uniformity. Enough of this.

But this Notion of an *Infallible Viſible Judge* is as falſe in *Reaſon* as in *Fact*. For *firſt*, it takes away the Uſe of every Man's *Reaſon*, and it is a Contradiction to have any, unleſs he were *ſuch an Interpreter and ſuch a Judge, as would conclude us by Conviction*, and not by Authority: That would be the moſt-Well come preſon in the World. But to over rule my own Sight, to give the Lye to my own Underſtanding; ſay *Black is White*, and that *Two* and *Three make Ten*; thus *Subjugare intellectum in Obſequium fidei*; to yield my Underſtanding to ſuch an In-evident way of Faith, nay, which is worſe, to believe a Lye, for ſo it is to them, to whom the thing to be believed appears Untrue, is moſt Unreaſonable.

If we muſt be *Led*, it had been eaſier for us to have been born Blind, we might have better follow'd then the Dog and the Bell; for we could not mend

our

our ſelves; *but to ſee, and to be Led*; and that in ways we ſee to be foul or wrong; this is Anxions. Here lies the Diſpute: And truly here the Queſtion might fairly end; *Either put out our Eyes, or let us uſe them*: But if we have Eyes for our Minds as well as for our Bodies, I ſee no Reaſon, why we ſhould truſt any man or men againſt the Eyes of our Underſtanding, any more than we ought to confide in them againſt the Senſe and Certainty of the Eyes of our Bodies.

Where is the pooreſt *Mechanick* that would be paid his Labour in baſe coyne for Silver by either *Pope* or *Biſhop*? and can we be ſo Brutiſh, as to think our *Nobler part* void of Diſtinction about that Treaſure which is of Eternal Moment: For though *Peter* was to *feed* the Sheep, yet the Sheep were not to follow *Peter* but Chriſt: *My Sheep hear my Voice*, ſays he, *and follow me, and a Stranger they will not follow*: Here is no *Mediator* betwixt Chriſt and his Sheep; nor does any body elſe *hear* his *Voice* for them; but they hear his Voice themſelves. And though the *Shepherd* may have many Servants, yet he *only* is their *Shepherd*, and they are *only* the *Sheep of his Fold*.

John 10. 14. 5. 27.

But there are three places of Scripture, that come freſh into my Remembrance, that are very pertinent to the preſent Occaſion. The *firſt* is this: *That which may be known of God, is manifeſt in Men, for God hath ſhewed it unto them*: That is, The Spirit of man being the *Candle* of the *Lord*, God hath enlightned it to manifeſt unto Man, what is neceſſary for him to know both of God and himſelf. Here is no need of *Wax-Candles* or *Tapers*,

Rom. 1. 19.

Prov. 20. 27.

Tapers, or a Visible Guide and Judge: for *still*, *he that believes has the Witness in himself.*

Another Passage is this: *Be ye* Followers *of me, even as I am also of Christ.* In which the Apostle is so far from setting himself up a *Judge* over the Church of *Corinth*, that he makes his Appeal to them concerning his Doctrine and Conversation, regulating both by that of his Lord *Jesus* Christ, and making them Judges of the Truth of his *Conformity* to that Example. *Be ye* Followers *of me*: How? after ~~what~~ what manner? What! Absolutely, without Examination? must we believe thee without any Trial, and take what thou sayest for granted without any more to do? no such thing. *Be ye* Followers *of me, even as I also am of* Christ: I submit my self to be *judg'd* by you according to that Rule; and all Men and *Churches* are to be thus measur'd, that lay Claim to the Name of *Christian*: The Text will bear it. 1 Cor. 11. 1.

The *Third* passage is in his *Second Epistle* to the same Church of *Corinth*; 'tis this; *Therefore seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of Dishonesty, not walking in Craftinesses, nor handling the* Word *of* God deceitfully; *but by manifestation of the Truth, commending our selves to* every Man's Conscience *in the Sight of God.* Here is the Utmost *Imposition* the Apostle makes use of: He requires not Men to *receive* him without *Evidence*, and refers himself to *that* of their own *Consciences* in the *Sight* of *God.* This was the Way of making Christians then; it must be the way of keeping and makeing Men Christians now. 2 Cor. 4. 1, 2.

Conscience,

Conſcience, in the beſt Senſe of the word, has ever been allowed to be a *Bond* upon Men in all Religions: But that Religion, who ever holds it, which, under Pretence of Authority, would ſuperceed *Conſcience*, and inſtead of making Men better, the End of Religion, make them worſe, by confounding all ſenſe and Diſtinction betwixt *Good* and *Evil*, and reſolving all into an *implicit Faith and blind Obedience unto* the Commands of a *Viſible Guide* and *Judge*, is falſe, it cannot be otherwiſe. For to admire what Men don't know, and to make it a Principle not to inquire is the *laſt mark of Folly* in the Believer, and of *Impoſture* in the Impoſer. To be ſhort, a *Chriſtian* implies a Man, and a Man implies *Conſcience and Underſtanding*; but he that has no *Conſcience* nor *Underſtanding*, as he has not, that has delivered them up to the Will of another Man, is no *Man*, and therefore no *Chriſtian*.

I do beſeech **you Proteſtants** of all Sorts, to conſider of the danger of this Principle with reſpect to *Religion*. *Of old 'twas the Fool that ſaid in his Heart there is no God?* But now, upon this Principle, Men muſt be made *Fools* in order to *believe* there is one. Shall *Folly*, which is the *Shame*, if not the Curſe of a Man, be the Perfection of a *Chriſtian?* Chriſt indeed has adviſed us to become as *Little Children*, but never to become ſuch *Fools*; for, as the Proverb is, this is *to be led by the Noſe*, and not by our Wits. You know, that God hates the *Sacrifice* of *Fools*: *I will pray with the Spirit and with* Underſtanding *alſo*, ſaith the Apoſtle. Let us commend that Teſtimony, which we believe to be true, to the *Conſciences* of Men, and let them have the Goſpel priviledge of *Examination*: *Error* only looſes upon Trial:

1 Cor. 14. Eccle. 15. 1.

Trial: If this had been the Way to *Chriſtianity*, with Reverence be it ſpoken, God had not made our Condition better, but worſe; for this tranſlates our Faith and Dependance upon God, to Man, and the Poſſibility, if not Probability of Man's erring, expoſes us to a greater inſecurity than before: For *where I never truſted, I never could be deceived*: But if I muſt abandon my own Senſe and Judgment, and yield my ſelf up to the Faith and Authority of another (to ſay no more of the Blindneſs and Lameneſs of ſuch Belief and Devotion) *what Security can I have, that the Man or Men whom I truſt may not err and deceive me?* and that Deceit is irrepareable.

Again, ſince Mankind is a reaſonable Creature, and that the more reaſonable he is in his Religion, the nearer *to his own being he comes*, and to the Wiſdom and Truth of his Creator, that did ſo make him, a Religion without Reaſon, Impoſed by an unaccountable Authority, againſt Reaſon, Senſe and Conviction cannot be the Religion of the God of Truth and Reaſon: For it is not to be thought that he requires any thing that carries any violence upon the Nature of his Creature, or that gives the Lye to that Reaſon or Senſe with which he firſt endow'd him. In ſhort, either Convince my underſtanging by the Light of Truth and Power of Reaſon, or bear down my Infidelity with the force of Miracles: For not to give me Underſtanding or Faith, and to preſs a ſubmiſſion that requires both, is moſt unreaſonable.

But if there were no other Argument then this, it goes a great way with me, that as to ſuch as have their underſtanding at liberty, if they are miſta-

mistaken, there may be hopes of reclaiming them by Informing them; but where *the Understanding* and *Conscience* are enslav'd to Authority, and where Men make it a Principal Doctrine to suspect their own Sense and strive against their own Convictions; to move only by other Men's Breath and fall down to their Conclusions; *nothing seems to be left for the soundest Arguments and clearest Truths to work upon.* They had almost need to be Re-Created in order to be Converted; for who can reasonably endeavour to make him a Christian that is not a Man; which he cannot be truly said to be, who has no understanding, or resolves not to use it, but reject it, which is yet worse: For he that has no understanding has no prejudice against it, but he that purposely denys and abuses it, is so much worse, as that he turns Enemy to him that has and uses his understanding. He therefore can never be convinced of his Error, *who is prejudiced against the necessary means of Conviction, which is the use of his Understanding*, without which 'tis impossible he should ever be Convinced.

To Conclude, I have reserved, till last, one Argument which is *ad hominem*, unanswerable by us *Protestants*, and without yielding to which, we cannot be consistent with our selves, or be thought to do unto others, what we would have others do unto us, and that is this: *The Translation of the Scripture* was the painful work of our worthy *Ancestors*; and this I call their *most solemn appeal to the People against the Pope and Traditions of* Rome *in the business of their Separation*. For when the question rose of the divine Authority of this or the other Practice in the Doctrine or Worship of the *Roman* Church,

Church, presently they recurred to the Scriptures, and therefore made them speak *English* that they might witness for them to the people. This *appeal* to the People in defence of their Sparation, by making them Judges of their proceeding against the Church, according to the Testimony of the holy Scripture, puts every Man in possession of them. *Search the Scriptures*, say the first *Protestants*, *Prove all things*; *see if what we say against the Pope and Church of* Rome *be not true*; and in case any difficulty did arise, they exhorted all to wait upon God, for the divine aid of his Spirit to illuminate their understandings, that one should not impose upon the other, but commend them to God: Be Brotherly, Patient, Long-suffering, ready to help the Weak, inform the Ignorant, shew tenderness to the Mistaken, and with reason and moderation to gain the Obstinate. In short, Protestancy *is a restoring to every Man his just right of Inquiry and Choice*: And to its honour be it ever spoken, there is greater likelihood of finding Truth, where all have Liberty to seek after it, then where it is denyed to all, but a few Grandees, and those too as short sighted perhaps as their Neighbours. But now let us *Protestants* examine, if we have not departed from this Sobriety, this Christian Temperance? How comes it that we who have been forgiven much, have our selves fallen upon our fellow Servants, who yet owes us nothing? Have not we refused them this reasonable choice? Have we not *threatned*, *beaten* and *imprisoned* them? Pray Consider, have you not *made Creeds*, framed Faith, *form'd* and *regulated* a Worship, and *strictly enjoyn'd* all Mens obedience, by the help of the Civil Power,

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upon pain of great Sufferings, which have not been ſpared upon *Diſſenters* ; though they have been, in Common, Renouncers and Proteſtors with you againſt the *Pope* and *Church* of *Rome*. For this the Land mourns, Heaven is diſpleas'd, and all is out of due courſe.

To give us the *Scriptures, and knock our Fingers for taking them* : To tranſlate them that we may read them, *and puniſh us for endeavouring to underſtand and uſe them as well as we can*, both with reſpect to God and our Neighbour, is very unreaſonable upon our *Proteſtant* Principles. I wiſh we could ſee the miſchief we draw upon our ſelves, and which is worſe upon our cauſe ; for the *Papiſt*, in this caſe, acts according to his Principle, but we againſt our Principle, which ſhews indeed that we Profeſs the better Religion, but that we alſo are more condemnable. If we will Conſider it ſeriouſly, we ſhall find it not much more injurous to Scripture, Truth and good Conſcience that we believe as the Church believes, then that we believe as the Church ſays the Scripture would have us believe. For where is the difference, ſince I am not allowed to uſe my underſtanding about the Senſe of Scripture any more then about the Faith of the Church: And if I muſt not receive any thing for Faith or Worſhip from Scripture, but what is *handed* to me through the *meanings* of the Church, or her Clergy, I ſee my ſelf in as ill terms, as if I had ſat down with the old Doctrine *of believing as the Church believes*. And had the Controverſie been only for the Word *Scripture*, without the uſe and application of it, for, at this rate, that is all that is left us, truly the enterpriſe of our Fathers had

had been weak and unadviſed; but becauſe nothing leſs was intended by them, and that the Tranſlation of the Scripture was both the *Appeal* and *Legacy* of thoſe *Proteſtant* Anceſtors; for the reaſons before mention'd, I muſt conclude we are much degenerated from the ſimplicity of Primitive Proteſtancy, and need to be admoniſht of our Backſlidings: And I heartily Pray to Almighty God, that he would quicken us by his repeated Mercies and Providences to return to our firſt Love, to the Light and Spirit of his Son, that we may become Sons indeed, the ground of True Chriſtianity, and from whence the true Miniſtry hath its ſpring, which is open and free to thoſe that are Proficients in that Holy School.

1 Cor. 2. Gal. 1. 16. 1 John 1. 2. Chap. 2. 27.

Let the Scriptures be free; Sober Opinion tolerated; Good Life cheriſht, Vice puniſht: Away with *Impoſition, Nick-Names, Animoſities*, for the Lord's ſake, and let the Scripture be our *Common Creed*, and *Pious Living* the *Teſt* of *Chriſtianity*, that God may pleaſe to perfect his good Work of Grace he has begun, and deliver us from all our Enemies, both within and without.

Sect. 6. *Of the Propagation of Faith by Force.*

I Am now come to the laſt point, and that is **Propagation of Faith** by **Force**: In which I ſhall, with the *Eccleſiaſticks*, conſider the *Civil Magiſtrates* ſhare herein: For though the Church Men are principally guilty, who being profeſt Miniſters of a Religion which renounces and condemns

Force, excite the Civil Magistrate to use it, both to impose their own Belief, and suppress that of other mens; yet the Civil Magistrate in running upon their Errands, and turning Executioner of their Cruelty upon such as dissent from them, involves himself in their Guilt.

That in this Protestant Country Laws have been made to prosecute Men for their Dissent from the National Worship, and that those Laws have been executed, I presume will not be denyed: For not only our own Histories since the Reformation will furnish us with Instances unbecoming our Pretences, as the Case of *Barrow*, *Penrey*, *&c.* in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, and others in the Reign of King *James* and *Charles* the First, but our own Age abounds with Proofs. *Thousands have been Excommunicated and Imprisoned; whole Families Undone; not a Bed left in the House, not a Cow in the Field, nor any Corn in the Barn: Widows and Orphants Stript without Pity, no regard being had to Age or Sex:* And what for? *only because of their Meeting to Worship God after another Manner then according to the form of the Church of* England; *but yet in a very peacable way.*

Nor have they only suffered this by Laws intended against them, but, after an excessive rate, by *Laws* known to have been never design'd against them, and *only intended against the Papists.* And in these Cases four times the Value hath not served their turn. We can prove 60 *l.* taken for 13 *l.* and not one Penny returned, as we made appear before a *Committee* of the late Parliament, *which is the Penalty of four Offences for one*; to say nothing of the gross Abuses that have been committed against our Names and Persons, by Men of ill Fame and Life,

Life, that have taken the Advantage of our Tenderneſs, and the preſent Poſture of the Law againſt us, to have their Revengeful and Covetous Ends upon us. And though we are, yet unredreſt, not a Seſſion of Parliament has paſt theſe Seventeen Years, in which we have not humbly remonſtrated our ſuffering condition: We have done our Part, which has been patiently to Suffer and modeſtly to Complain; It is yours now to hear our Groans, and, if ever you expect Mercy from God, to deliver us. The late Parliament, juſt before its Diſſolution was preparing ſome Relief for us; if that Parliament could think of it, yea, begin it, we hope you will finiſh and ſecure it.

The better to remove all Scruples or Objections, that *Politically* or *Eccleſiaſtically*, on the part of the State of the Church, may be advanced againſt us in this requeſt, I ſhall divide this Diſcourſe into two Parts. Firſt, *Cæſar's Authority*; next, the *Church's Power in things that relate to Faith and Conſcience*; with my Conſiderations upon both.

Our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt did long ſince diſtinguiſh the *Things of* Cæſar *from the Things of God*, in his plain and notable Anſwer unto that enſnaring Queſtion of the *Jews*, *Is it Lawful to pay Tribute to* Cæſar *or not. Render* (ſays he) *unto* Cæſar *the Things that are* Cæſar's, *and to* God *the Things that are* God's: That is, *Divine Worſhip*, and all things relating to it, belong unto God, *Civil Obedience* to *Cæſar*. God can only be the Author of right Acts of Worſhip in the Mind: This is granted by all; therefore it is not in the Matt. 22. 17. 21.

Power of any Man or Men in the World, to compel the Mind rightly to Worſhip God. Where this is but attempted, God's Prerogative is invaded, and *Caſar*, by which Word I underſtand the *Civil Government*, *engroſſeth All.* For he doth not only take his own Things as much as he can, but the Things appertaining to God alſo; ſince if God hath not Conſcience for his ſhare, he hath nothing. *My Kingdom*, ſays Chriſt, *is not for this World*, nor is the Magiſtrate's Kingdom of the other World: Therefore he exceeds his Province and Commiſſion when ever he meddles with the Rights of it. Let Chriſt have his Kingdom, he is ſufficient for it; and let *Caſar* have his, 'tis his Due. *Give unto* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſar's, *and to God the things that are God's.* Then there are things *that belong not to* Cæſar, and we are not to give thoſe to him which belong not to him; and ſuch are God's things, divine things, things of an Eternal Reference: But thoſe that belong to *Caſar* and his Earthly Kingdom, muſt be, of Duty, rendred to him.

John 18. 36.

If any ſhould ask me, *what are the things properly belonging to* Cæſar? I anſwer in Scripture Language, *To love Juſtice, do Judgement, relieve the Oppreſſed, right the Fatherleſs, and in general be a Terror unto Evil-doers, and a Praiſe to them that do well*; for this is the great End of Magiſtracy: And in theſe things they are to be obeyed of Conſcience, as well as Intereſt.

But perhaps my Anſwer ſhall be reckoned too general and ambiguous, and a freſh Queſtion ſtarted, *who are the Evil-doers, to whom the Civil Authority ought to be terrible?* But this ought in my Judgement

ment to be no Queſtion with Men that underſtand the Nature of Civil Authority; for thoſe are the Evil-Doers, that violate thoſe Laws which are neceſſary to the Preſervation of Civil Society, as *Thieves*, *Murderers*, *Adulterers*, *Traytors*, *Plotters*, *Drunkards*, *Cheats*, *Vagabonds*, and the like miſchievous and diſſolute Perſons: Men void of Virtue, Truth and Sincerity, the Foundation of all good Government, and only firm Bond of human Society. Whoever denies me this, muſt at the ſame Time ſay, *that Virtue is leſs neceſſary to Government than Opinion*, and that the moſt *Vitiated* Men, profeſſing but *Cæſar's Religion*, are the *beſt* Subjects to *Caſar's Authority*; conſequently, that other Men, living never ſo honeſtly and induſtriouſly, and having elſe as good a Claim to Civil Protection and Preferment, ſhall meerly for their Diſſent from that Religion (a Thing they cant help; *for Faith is the Gift of God*) be reputed the worſt of Evil-doers: which is followed with expoſing their Names to Obloquie, their Eſtates to Ruin, and their Perſons to Goals, Exiles, and Abundance of other Cruelties. What is this, but to confound the *Things of Cæſar* with the *Things of God*, Divine Worſhip with Civil Obedience, the Church with the State, and perplex human Societies with endleſs Debates about Religious Differences? Nay, is not this to erect new Meaſures to try the Members of Worldly Societies by, and give an Acceſſion to another Power, then that which is neceſſary to the Conſtitution of Civil Government? But that which ought to deter wiſe Rulers from aſſuming and exercifing ſuch an Authority, is the Conſideration of the pernicious Conſequences of doing ſo.

For, *First*, It makes **Property**, which is the first and most fixt Part of *English* Government *floating* and uncertain; for it seems, no Conformity to the Church, no *Property* in the State: And doubtless, the Insecurity of *Property* can be no Security to the Government: Pray think of that.

II. It makes me owe more to the *Church* then to the *State*; for in this Case, the Anchor I ride by, is not my *Obedience* to Laws relating to the Preservation of *Civil Society*, but *Conformity* to certain Things belonging to the Doctrine and Discipline of the *Church*: So that though I may be an honest, industrious *English man*, a great Lover of my *Country*, and an Admirer of the *Government* I live under, yet if I refuse to profess the Religion that either now is, or hereafter may be imposed, be it never so false, that is all one, I must neither enjoy the *Liberty* of my *Person*, nor the *quiet Possession* of my *Estate*.

III. This not only alters the *Government*, by sacrificing Mens *Properties* for that which cannot be called a Sin against *Property*, nor an Offence to the Nature of *Civil Government*, if any Transgression at all, but it narrows the *Interest* and *Power* of the *Governours*: For look what Number they cut off from their Protection, they cut off from themselves and the Government; not only rendring thereby a great Body of People *Useless*, but provoaking them to be *Dangerous*: To be sure it clogs the *Civil Magistrate* in his Administration of Government, making

ing that neceſſary which is not at all neceſſary to him as Ceſar.

It is a Sort of **Duumvirateſhip** in Power, by which the *Civil Monarchy* is broken: For as that was a Plurality of Men, *ſo this is a Plurality of Powers.* And to ſpeak freely, the *Civil Power* is made to act the *Lackey*, to run of all the unpleaſant Errands the frowad Zeal of the other ſends it upon; and the beſt preferment it receives for its Pains, is to be *Informer*, *Conſtable*, or *Hangman* to ſome of the beſt Livers, and therefore the beſt Subjects in the Kingdom.

Oh! What greater Injuſtice to *Cæſar* then to make his Government vary by ſuch *Modes* of Religion, and oblige him to hold his Obedience from his People, not ſo much by their *Conformity* to *him*, as to the *Church*, a meer Relative of t'other World.

IV. This is ſo far from reſembling the Univerſal Goodneſs of God, who diſpenſes his Light, Air, Showers and comfortable Seaſons to all, and whom *Cæſar* ought alwayes to imitate, and ſo remote from increaſing the *Trade*, *Populacy* and *Wealth* of this Kingdom, as it evidently tends to the utter Ruin of Thouſands of *Traders*, *Artificers* and *Huſband-men* and their Families; and by increaſing the Charges, It muſt needs encreaſe the Poor of the Nation.

V. This muſt needs be a great *Diſcouragement* to Strangers from coming in, and ſetling themſelves amongſt us, when they have Reaſon to apprehend that they, and their Children after them, can be no longer ſecured in the Enjoyment of their *Pro-*

perties, then they ſhall be able to prevail with their Conſciences to believe that the Religion which our Laws do now, or ſhall at any time hereafter approve and impoſe, is undoubtedly true; and that the Way of worſhipping of God, which ſhall be at any Time by our Laws enjoyned, is, and ſhall be more agreeable to the Will of God then any other Way in which God is worſhipped in the World.

VI. That way of Worſhip we are commanded Conformity to, doth not make better Livers, that is a Demonſtration, nor better *Artiſts*, for it cannot be thought that going to *Church*, hearing *Common-Prayer*, or believing in the preſent *Epiſcopacy*, learn Men to build *Ships* or *Houſes*; to make *Clothes*, *Shoes*, *Dials* or *Watches*; *Buy*, *Sell*, *Trade* or *Commerce* better then any that are of another Perſwaſion. And ſince theſe Things are *Uſeful*, if not *Requiſite*; in *Civil Society*, is not prohibiting, nay, ruining ſuch Men, becauſe they will not come to hear *Common-Prayer*, &c. deſtructive of *Civil Society?* Pray ſhew me better Subjects. If any object, *Diſſenters have not alwayes been ſo*; the Anſwer is ready, do not expoſe them, protect them in their *Lives*, *Liberties* and *Eſtates*; for in this preſent poſture they think they can call nothing their own, and that all the Comforts they have in this World are hourly lyable to *Forfeiture* for their *Faith*, *Hope* and *Practice* concerning the other World. Is not this to deſtroy Nature and Civil Government, when People are ruined in their Natural and Civil Capacity, not for Things relating to either, but what are of a Supernatural Import?

VII. This

VII. This deprives them of Protection who protect the Government. Diſſenters have a great Share in the *Trade*, which is the Greatneſs of this Kingdom; and they make a large Proportion of the *Taxes* that maintain the Government. And is it reſonable, or can it be *Chriſtian*, when they pay *Tribute* to *Caſar*, to be preſerved in an *Undiſturbed Poſſeſſion* of the *Reſt*, that the *Reſt* ſhould be continually expoſed for the peaceable Exerciſe of their Conſciences to God?

VIII. Neither is it a Conformity to True and Solid Religion, ſuch as is neceſſary to Eternal Salvation, wherein moſt Parties verbally agree, but for a *Modification* of Religion; *ſome peculiar Way* of Worſhip and Diſcipline. *All confeſs One God, One Chriſt, One Holy Ghoſt, and that it is indiſpenſably requiſite to live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godlikely in this preſent evil World*; yet is one pro- 2 Tit. 11, 12.
ſecuting the other for his Conſcience, *ſeizing Corn, driving away Cattel, breaking open Doors, taking away and ſpoiling of Goods*; in ſome places not leaving a *Cow to give poor Orphants Milk*, nor a *Bed to lie on*; in other Places Houſes have been ſwept ſo clean, that a *Stool* hath not been left to ſit on, nor ſo much as working Tools to labour for Bread. To ſay nothing of the *Oppobrious Speeches, Bloody Blows* and *Tedious Impriſonments*, even to Death it ſelf, through *naſtineſs* of *Dungeons*, that many Innocent People have ſuffered only for their peaceable Conſcience.

IX. But this way of proceeding for Maintenance of the National Religion, is of an ill Conſequence

quence upon this account, that Heaven is barred from all futher *Illuminations*. Let God send what *Light* he pleases into the World, it must not be received by *Cæsar*'s People without *Cæsar*'s Licence; and if it happen that *Cæsar* be not presently convinced as well as I that it is of God, I must either renounce my *Convictions*, and lose my *Soul* to please *Cæsar*, or profess and persevere in my *Perswasion*, and so lose my *Life*, *Liberty* or *Estate* to please God. This hath frequently occur'd, and may again. Therefore I would entreat *Cæsar* to consider the sad Consequence of *Imposition*, and remember both that God did never ask Man Leave to *introduce Truth*, or make further Discoveries of his Mind to the World, and that it hath been a Woful Snare to those Governments that have been drawn to employ their Power against his Work and People.

X. This Way of Proceedure endeavours to stifle, or else to punish *Sincerity*; for *Fear* or *Hopes*, *Frowns* or *Favour* prevail only with *base* Minds; Souls degenerated from true Nobleness. Every Spark of Integrity must be extinguisht, where *Conscience* is sacrificed to *Worldly Safety* and *Preferment*. This *Net* holds no *Temporizers*: *Honest Men* are all the Fish it catches: But one would think they should make but an ill Treat to such as reckon themselves *generous Men*, and what is more, *Christians* too. That which renders the Matter more unjustifiable, is the *Temptation* such *Severity* puts men upon, not hardy enough to *suffer for Conscience*, yet strongly perswaded they have *Truth* on their Side, to desert their *Principles*, and smother their *Convictions*, which

which in plain Terms is to make, of Sincere Men, Hypocrites: Whereas it is one great End of Government by all laudable Means, to preſerve Sincerity; for without it there can be no Faith or Truth in *Civil Society*. Nor is this all; for its a *Maxim* worthy of *Caſar*'s Notice, **Never to think him true to Cæſar that is falſe to his own Conſcience**: Beſides, raped Conſciences treaſure up *Revenge*, and ſuch Perſons are not likely to be longer Friends to *Caſar*, then he hath *Preferments* to allure them, or *Power* to deter them from being his moſt implacable Enemies.

XI. There is not ſo ready a Way to **Atheiſm**, as this of extingniſhing the Senſe of Conſcience for Wordly Ends: Deſtroy that Internal Rule of *Faith*, *Worſhip* and *Practice* towards God, and the Reaſon of my Religion will be *Civil Injunctions*, and not *Divine Convictions*; conſequently, I am to be of as many Religions as the Civil Authority ſhall impoſe, however untrue or contradictory. This *Sacred Tye* of Conſcience, thus broken, farewel to all *Heavenly Obligations* in the Soul, *Scripture-Authority* and ancient *Proteſtant Principles*. Chriſt may at this Rate become what the *Jews* would have had him and his Apoſtles to be reputed, to wit, *Turners of the World up-ſide down*, as their Enemies repreſented them; and the godly Martyrs of all Ages ſo many Self-Murderers; for they might juſtly be eſteem'd Reſiſters of *Worldly Authority*, ſo far as that Authority concerned it ſelf with the Impoſition of Religion, becauſe they refuſed the Conformity commanded by it, even to Death.

And

And it may not be unworthy of *Ceasar*'s Consideration, that from these Proceedings People are tempted to infer, there is nothing in Religion but *Worldly Aims* and *Ends*, because so much Worldly Power is abus'd, under the Name of *Religion*, to vex and destroy Men for being of another Religion; and that he hazards the best Hold and Obligation he hath to Obedience, which is Conscience: For where they are taught only to Obey for *Interest*, *Duty* and *Conviction* are out of Doors. By all Means let *Conscience* be sacred, and *Virtue* and *Integrity* (though under dissenting Principles) cherisht: *Charity* is more powerful then *Severity* and *Perswasion* than all the *Penal Laws* in the World.

Lastly, To the Reproach of this Course with Wise Men, it hath never yet obtain'd the End desired, since instead of Compliance, the Difference is thereby widened and the Sufferers are pitied by Spectators, which only helps to increase the Number of Dissenters, for whoever is in the Wrong, few think the Persecutor in the Right. This in all Ages, having been the Issue of severe Prosecution of Dissenters for Matters of *Religion*; what a Cruel, Troublesom, Thankless, Succesles Office is it for *Cæsar* to be employed in? May she take better Measures of his Authority and Interest, and use his Power to the Encouragement of all the *Virtuous* and *Industrious*, and Just Punishment of the *Lazy* and *Vicious* in all Perswasions; so shall the Kingdom *Flourish*, and the Government *Prosper*.

Church-Power supposeth a *Church* first. It will not be improper therefore to examine; *first*, What

a

a Scripture-New-Teſtament-Church is; and *next*, what is the Scripture-Power belonging to ſuch a Church. A Scripture-Church as ſhe may be called Viſible, is *a Company or Society of People, believing, profeſſing and practiſing according to the Doctrine and Example of Chriſt Jeſus and his Apoſtles*, and not according to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, that *taught for Doctrine the Traditions of Men*. They are ſuch as are Meek in Heart, Lowly in Spirit (*a*) Chaſt in Life, (*b*) Virtuous in all Converſation, (*c*) full of Self-Denyal, (*d*) Long-ſuffering and Patient, (*e*) not only forgiving, (*f*) but loving their very Enemies; which anſwers Chriſt's own Character of himſelf, Religion and Kingdom, which is the moſt apt Diſtinction that ever can be given of the Nature of his Church and her Authority, *viz.* (*g*) **My Kingdom is not of this World.** Which well connects with *Render unto* Cæſar *the things that are* Cæſar's, *and unto* God *the things that are* God's.

a Mat. 11. 10.
b 1 Pet. 3. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 2.
c Phil. 4. 8. 1 Pet 1. 15.
d Mat. 16. 24.
e 2 Cor. 4. 6.
f Luke 6. 37.
g Joh. 18. 36.

Mat. 22. 21.

It was an Anſwer to a very ſuſpitious Queſtion; for it was familiarly bruited *that he was a King, and came to poſſeſs his Kingdom, and was by ſome, called the King of the* Jews.

Luke 13. 2.

The *Jews* being then ſubjected to the *Roman* Empire, it concerned *Pilate*, *Cæſar's Deputy*, to underſtand his pretentions, which upon better information he found to center in this, *My Kingdom is not of this World, elſe would my Subjects fight for me.* As if he had ſaid, theſe Reports are a meer perverſion of

John 18. 36.

my

my Peaceable and Self-denying Intentions; an Infamy invented by malicious *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, that they might the better prevail with *Cæsar* to Sacrifice me to their hatred and revenge.

I am *Cæsar's* Friend, I seek none of his Kingdoms from him, nor will I sow Sedition, plot or conspire his Ruin; no, *Let all Men render unto* Cæsar *the Things that are* Cæsar's: That's my Doctrine; for I am come to erect a Kingdom of another Nature then that of this World, to wit, a *Spiritual* Kingdom, to be set up in the *Heart*, and *Conscience* is my *Throne*; upon that will I sit, and rule the Children of Men in Righteousness; and whoever *lives Soberly, Righteously and Godlily in this World*, shall be my good and loving Subjects. And they will certainly make no ill ones for *Cæsar*, since such Virtue is the end of Government, and renders his Charge both more easie and safe then before. Had I any other Design then this, would I suffer my Self to be reproached, traduced and persecuted by a conquered people? Were it not more my Nature to suffer then revenge, would not their many provocations have drawn from me some Instance of another kind then the Forbearance and Forgiveness I teach? Certainly, were I animated by another principle then the perfection of Meekness and Divine Sweetness, I should not have forbidden *Peter* fighting, saying, *put up thy Sword*, or Instructed my Followers to bear Wrongs; but have revenged all Affronts, and, by Plots and other Stratagems, have attempted Ruin to my Enemies, and the Acquisition of worldly Empire: And no doubt but they would have

Luke 17.21.

Titus 2. 12.

Mat. 26. 52.

have fought for me. Nay, I am not only patiently, and with Pity to Enemies, ſenſible of their cruel Carriage towards me for my Good Will to them, whoſe Eternal Happineſs I only ſeek; but I foreſee what they further intend againſt me: They deſign to crucifie me: And to do it, will rather free a Murderer then ſpare their Saviour. They will perform that Cruelty with all the Agravation and Contempt they can; deriding me themſelves, and expoſing me to the Deriſion of others: They will mock my Divine Kingſhip with a *Crown* of *Thorns*, and in my Agonies of Soul and body, for a Cordial, give me *Gall* and *Vinegar* to drink. But notwithſtanding all this, to ſatisfie the World that my Religion is above Wrath and Revenge, I can forgive them.

Mat. 27. 20.

Ver. 27, &c.

Ver. 29.

Ver. 48.

And to ſecure *Cæſar* and his People from all Fears of Impoſition, notwithſtanding my Authority, and the many *Legions* of Angels I might command, both to my Deliverance, and the Enforcement of my Meſſage upon Mankind; I reſolve to promote neither with worldly Power; for it is not of the Nature of my Religion and Kingdom. And as I neither aſſume nor practice any ſuch thing my Self, that am the great Author, Promoter and Example of this Holy Way; ſo have I not only never taught my Diſciples to live or act otherwiſe, or given them a Power I refuſe to uſe my Self, but expreſly forbad them, and warn'd them, in my Inſtructions, of exerciſing any the leaſt Revenge, Impoſition or Coertion towards any. This is evident in

Luk. 23. 34. *Mat.* 26. 53.

my

my Sermon preached upon the Mount, where I freely, publickly and with much Plainneſs, not only *prohibited Revenge*, but *injoyned Love to Enemies*, making it to be a great Token of true Diſcipleſhip to ſuffer Wrongs, and conquer Cruelty by Patience and Forgiveneſs; which is certainly very far from Impoſition or Compulſion upon other Men.

Mat. 5. 44, 45, 46, 47.

Furthermore, when I was ſtrongly bent for *Jeruſalem*, and ſent Meſſengers before to prepare ſome entertainment for me and my Company, in a Village belonging to the *Samaritans*, and the People refuſed becauſe they apprehended I was going to *Jeruſalem*, though ſome of my Diſciples, particularly *James* and *John*, were provoakt to that Degree, that they asked me, if I were willing that they ſhould command Fire from Heaven to deſtroy thoſe *Samaritans*, as *Elias* in another Caſe had done; I turned about, and rebuked them, ſaying, *Ye know not what Manner of Spirit ye are of; for I am not come into the World to deſtroy Mens Lives, but*, by my peaceable Doctrine, Example and Life to *ſave them*.

Luke 9. 53, 54, 55, 56.

At another time, one of my Diſciples relating to me ſome Paſſages of their Travails, told me of a certain Man they ſaw, that caſt out Devils in my Name, and becauſe he was not of their Company, nor followed them, ſaid he, *we forbad him*; as if they thereby ſerved and pleaſed me; but I preſently teſtified my Diſlike of the Ignorance and Narrowneſs of their Zeal, and, to inform them better, told them;

Luk. 9. 49, 50.

them, they ſhould not have forbid him; *for he that is not againſt us is for us.*

My Drift is not Opinion, but *Piety:* They that caſt out Devils, convert Sinners, and turn Men to Righteouſneſs, are not againſt me, nor the Nature and Religion of my Kingdom, and therefore ought to be cheriſht rather then forbid. That I might ſufficiently declare and inculcate my mind in this Matter, I did at another Time, and upon a different Occaſion. preach againſt all Coertion and Perſecution for Matters of Faith and Practice towards God, in my Parable of the Sower, as my Words manifeſt, which were theſe; *The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a Man which ſowed good Seed in his Field; but while Men ſlept, his Enemy came, and ſowed Tares among the Wheat, and went his Way; but when the Blade ſprung up, and brought forth Fruit, there appeared the Tares alſo; ſo the Servants of the Houſhoulder came and ſaid, didſt thou not ſow good Seed in thy Field? from whence than hath it Tares? he anſwered, an Enemy hath done this; the Servants ſaid unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? but he ſaid* Nay, *leſt while ye gather up the Tares, ye root up alſo the Wheat with them, let both grow together till the Harveſt, and in the Time of Harveſt I will ſay to the Reapers, gather ye together firſt the Tares, and bind them in Bundles to burn them, but gather the Wheat into my Barn.* Mat. 13.24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

And that I might not leave ſo neceſſary a Truth miſ-apprehended of my dear Followers, or liable to any Miſ-conſtructions, my Diſciples, when together, deſiring an Explanation, I interpreted my words thus:

He that ſoweth the good Seed is the Son of Man; the Field is the World; the good Seed are the Children of the Kingdom; but the Tares are the Children of the Wicked One; the Enemy that ſowed them is the Devil; the Harveſt is the End of the World; and the Reapers are the Angels.

Verſ. 36, 37, 38, 39.

This Patience, this Long Suffering and great Forbearance belong to my Kingdom and the Subjects of it; my Doctrine ſpeaks it, and my Example confirms it, and this can have no poſſible Agreement with Impoſition and Perſecution for Conſcience. 'Tis true, I once whipt out the Prophaners of my Father's Temple; but *I never whipt any in.* I call'd, I cry'd to every one that thirſted to come, and freely offer'd my Aſſiſtance to the Weary and Heavy Laden; *but I never impos'd my Help, or forced any to receive me*; for I take not my Kingdom by Violence, but by Suffering. And that I might ſufficiently deter my Followers from any ſuch Thing, as I profeſs my ſelf to be their Lord and Maſter, ſo have I commanded them to love one another in a more eſpecial Manner. But if inſtead thereof any ſhall grow proud, high minded, and beat or abuſe their Fellow-Servants in my Religious Family, when I come to take an account of my Houſhold, he ſhall be cut aſunder, and appointed his Portion among the Unbelievers. Behold the Recompence I appoint to Impoſing Lordly Perſons, ſuch as count others Infidels, and to make them ſuch Believers as themſelves, will exerciſe Violence towards them, and if they prevail not, will call for *Fire from Heaven to devour them*; and if Heaven refuſe to gratefy their *Rage*, will fall a Beating and Killing, and think, it may be, they do God good Service

John 15. 12.

Service too; but their Lot shall be with Unbelievers forever.

Nay, I have so effectually provided against all Mastery, that I expresly charged them, *not to be many Masters; for one was their Master*: I told them, the *greatest* amongst them was to be *Servant* to the rest, not to *impose* upon the rest: Nay, that to be great in my Kingdom, they must become as gentle and harmless as *little Children*, and such cannot force and punish in Matters of Religion. In fine, I strictly commanded them *to love one another*, as I have loved them, who am ready to lay down my Life for the Ungodly, instead of taking away Godly Men's Lives for Opinions. And this is the great Maxim of my Holy Religion, *He that would be my Disciple, must* not Crucifie other Men, but *take up his Cross and follow me, who am meek and lowly*, and such as endure to the end, shall find Eternal Rest to their Souls; this is the Power I use, and this is the Power I give.

How much this agrees with the Language, Doctrine and Example of *Jesus Christ*, the Son and Lamb of God, I shall leave them to consider that read and believe Scripture. But some affected to present Church-Power, and desiring their Ruin that conform not to her Worship and Discipline, will object, *That Christ did give his Church Power to bind and loose, and bid any Persons agrieved tell the Church.*

I grant it; but what binding was that? was it I Pray with outward Chains and Fetters, in nasty Holes and Dungeons? nothing less: Or, was it that his Church had that true Discerning in her and

Power with him, that what ſhe bound, that is, condemned, or looſed, that is, remitted, ſhould ſtand ſo in God's Sight and Chriſt's Account?

But tell the Church; and what then? obſerve Chriſt's Extent in the Puniſhment of the Offender: *If the Offender will neither receive private Admonition, nor hear the Church, then* (ſays Chriſt) *let him be to thee as an* Heathen, *&c.* Here's not one word of *Fines, Whips, Stocks, Pillories, Goals*, and the like Inſtruments of Cruelty, to puniſh the Heretick: For the Purport of his Words ſeems to be no more than this; If any Member of the Church refuſe thy private Exhortation and the Church's Admonition, look upon ſuch a Perſon as obſtinate and perverſe have no more to do with him; let him take his Courſe, thou haſt done well, and the Church is clear of him.

Well, but ſay the *Church Fighters* of our Age, *Did not* St. Paul *wiſh them out off that troubled the Church in his time?* Yes: But with what Sword think you? Such as Chriſt bid *Peter* put up, or the *Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*? Give him leave to explain his own Words; *For though we walk in the Fleſh,* **We do not War after the Fleſh**; *for the* **Weapons of our Warfare** *are* **not Carnal**, *but mighty through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds, caſting down Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledge of God, and bringing every Thought into Obedience to Chriſt.*

Mat. 26. 52. Eph. 6. 12. to the 18. 2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5. 1 Tim. 1. 18.

What think you of this? Here are Warfares, Weapons, Oppoſitions and Conformity, and not only

ly no External Force about Matters of Religion uſed or countenanced, but the moſt expreſs and pathetical Excluſion and diſclaming of any ſuch Thing that can be given.

It was this great Apoſtle that askt that Queſtion, *Who art thou that judgeſt the ſervant of another? to his own Lord he ſtandeth or falleth:* Rom. 14. 4. *but he ſhall ſtand; for God is able to make him ſtand.* Can we think that *Impoſition* or *Perſecution* is able to Anſwer him this Queſtion in the Day of Judgment? Do we with Reaſon deny it to the *Papacy?* With what Reaſon then can we aſſume it to our ſelves? Let us remember who ſaid, *Not that we have Dominion over your Faith, but are* **Helpers** *of your Joy.* **Helpers**, then not **Impoſers** nor **Perſecutors**. What Joy can there be in that to the Perſecuted? but if *Paul* had no ſuch Commiſſion or Power over Conſcience, I would fain know by what Authority more inferiour Miniſters and Chriſtians do claim and uſe it.

The Apoſtle *Peter* is of the ſame mind; *Feed* ſays he, *the Flock of God, not by* **Conſtraint**, *&c. neither as being* **Lords** *over God's Heritage.* 1 Pet. 5. 2. 3. The Heritage of God is free, they have but one Lord in and of their Religion, *Chriſt Jeſus*, and they are Brethren. Mat. 23. 8.

The Apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *That where the Spirit of the Lord is there is Liberty*, but where *Coertion, Fines* and *Goals* are, there is no Liberty. 2 Cor. 3. 7. Is it to be ſuppoſed that men in theſe dayes are inſtructed by the Spirit of the Lord to deſtroy People in this World for their Faith about the other World? That cannot poſſibly be; ſuch mock

at it. Again, says that Apostle to the *Christians* of his time, *You are called to Liberty*; from what I pray, *Sin and the Ceremonies of the Law?* And shall theend of that call be the enthraling Conscience to human Edicts in Religion, yea, about meer Ceremonies of Religion, under the Gospel? This would make our Case worse then the *Jews*, for their Worship stood on divine Authority; and if to make men free from them, Christ came, and that those very Ordinances are by the Apostles call'd beggerly Elements and a burdensom Yoak, Is it reasonable that we must be subject to the Injunctions of men in the Worship of God, that are not of equal Authority with them?

Gal. 5. 13.

The Apostle yet informs us, *For this end*, says he, *Christ both dyed and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living: But why dost thou judge thy Brother?* Then which nothing can more expresly oppose the *Imposition, Excommunication and Persecution* that are among us; 'Tis as if he had said, Christ is Lord of *Christians*, by what Authority dost thou pretend to judge his Servants? Thou also art but one of them: A Brother at most. Thou hast no dominion over his Faith, nor hast thou Commission to be Lord over his Conscience; 'tis Christ's right, his purchase, he has paid for it: *For this end he both dyed and rose again, that he might be Lord of Dead and Living*; that he might rescue them from the Jaws of Oppression; from those that usurp over their Consciences, and make a prey of their Souls, *But why dost thou judge thy Brother?* If not *judge*; then not *Persecute, Plunder, Beat, Imprison* to Death our Brethren; that

Rom. 14. 9, 10.

must

must needs follow. Come, let us Protestants look at home, and view our Actions, if we are not the Men.

In short, *Let every man be fully Perſwaded in his own mind, and if any thing be ſhort, God will reveal it*; let us but be patient. It was not *Fleſh and Blood that revealed Chriſt to* Peter, they are Chriſt's words, therefore let us leave off the *Conſultations and Weapons of Fleſh and Blood*, and truſt Chriſt with his own Kingdom: He hath ſaid, *that the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*; and we cannot think that he would have us ſeek to *Hells Gates* to maintain it: And if it is not of this World, then not to be maintain'd by the *Force* and *Policy*, which are the Props of the Kingdoms of this World. *God*, the Apoſtle tells us, *has choſen the weak things of this World to confound the mighty*: Therefore he has not choſen the Strength and Power of this World to ſuppreſs Conſcientious People, that as to human force, are juſtly accounted weakeſt and moſt deſtitute, in all Ages, of defence. Rom. 14. 5. 1 Cor. 1. 27.

I will here conclude my Scripture-Proofs with this Exhortation or Injunction rather of the Apoſtle. *Ye are bought with a Price, be not made the Servants of Men.* The Subject here is not *human*, wherein human Ordinances are to be obeyed; that is not the Queſtion; but *Divine*; and thoſe that for fear or favour of Men deſert their Principles and betray their Conſciences, they renounce their Lord, deny him that bought them, and tread his Blood, the *Price* of their Souls, under their Feet: *Ye are bought with a Price*, Chriſt has purchaſt you, you are not your 1 Cor. 7. 23.

own, but his that bought you, therefore *be not the Servants of Men* about Gods things or Christ's Kingdom; vail to no man's Judgment, neither make man's determinations your Rule of Faith and Worship. *Stand fast in the Liberty, where-*
Gal. 5. *with he has made you free, and be not entang-*
Heb, 12. *led again into Bondage, for we are not come to that Mountain that we cannot touch, to* Sinai: We are not now to be kept under like *School-Boys* or *Minors:* That Imposition might be useful then, which is a bondage now. *Moses* was God's Servant and faithful, he saw, heard, and went upon the Mount for the People; *but Christians are come to Mount* Zion, *to* Jerusalem, *the Mother of Peace and Freedom.* Much then depended upon the Integrity of *Moses*, and yet God sent for the People near the Mount that they might see his Glory, and wrought Wonders and Miracles to engage their Faith and vindicate the Integrity of *Moses* his Servant (as the 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 Chapters of *Numbers* declares) and which none now can pretend to Vouch the exercise of their Authority: I say it pleased God then to appear by
Heb. 8. those ways; *but now the Law is brought home to every Man's Heart, and every one shall know God for himself, from the least to the greatest. My Sheep,* says Christ, *hear my Voice.* And let us remember that there is no possi-
John 10. bility of deception here, where there is no necessity of trusting. In fine, *Ye*
Mat. 16. *are bought with a Price, be not made the Servants of Men. One is your Lord even Christ, and ye are Brethren.*

But

But methinks I hear a ſtout Objection, and 'tis this: *At this rate you will overthrow all Church Diſcipline, all Cenſure of Errors, if no Man or Men can determine.* My Anſwer is ready and ſhort, No Scripture Church Diſcipline is hereby oppugn'd or weakned: *Let not the Sentence end in Violence upon the Conſcience unconvinced:* Let who will *expound* or *determine*, ſo it be according to true Church Diſcipline, which can be exerciſed on them only, who have willingly joyn'd themſelves in that Covenant of Union, and which proceeds only to a ſeparation from the reſt, a diſavowing or diſowning, and that only in Caſe of falling from Principles or Practices once received, or about known Treſpaſſes: But never to any *Corporal* or *Pecuniary* puniſhment; the *Two Arms* of Anty-Chriſt, or rather of that great *Beaſt* which carries the *Whore*.

But let us obſerve what ſort of Church Government the Apoſtle recommends. *Avoid fooliſh Queſtions, and Genealogies, and Contentions, and Striving about the Law; for they are unprofitable and vain:* 1 Tim. 1. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 23. Tit. 3. 9. **A Man that is an Heretick, after the firſt and ſecond Admonition, reject,** *knowing that he that is ſuch, is ſubverted and ſinneth, being* **Condemned of (or in) himſelf**; or Self-condemned.

It's very remarkable, *Firſt*, That this great Apoſtle, inſtead of exhorting *Titus* to ſtand upon Niceties, and ſacrifice Men's Natural Comforts and Enjoyments for Opinions of Religion, injoyns him to ſhun Diſputes about them; leaving People to their own Thoughts and Apprehenſions in thoſe Matters, as reputing the Loſs of Peace, in ſtriving, greater

Greater than the Gain that could ariſe from ſuch an Unity and Conformity: Which exactly agrees with another paſſage of his; *Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall* **Reveal** *even this unto you.* He did not ſay you ſhall be **fined, pillaged, excommunicated** and **flung** into Priſon, if ye be not of our Mind.

Phil. 3. 15.

2*dly*, That, in the Apoſtles Definition, an *Heretick* is a *Self-condemned* Perſon, one conſcious to himſelf of Error, and Obſtinany in it; but that are not Conſcientious Diſſenters; for many Ten Thouſands in this Nation act as they believe, and diſſent from the National Religion purely upon a Principle of Conſcience to Almighty God; and would heartily Conform if they could do it upon Conviction, or with any ſatisfaction to their own minds: And with Men of any Tenderneſs or common Senſe, their continual great Sufferings in Perſon and Eſtate; and their Patience under them, are a Demonſtration, or there can be none in the World, that Conſcience and not Humour or Intereſt is at bottom.

Nor can their Perſecutors diſprove them, unleſs they could ſearch Hearts, and that is a little too far for a Fallible Spirit to reach, and an Infallible One they deny. So that the Apoſtle makes not the *Heretick* to lie upon the ſide of Miſ-believing, or not coming up to his Degree of Faith and Knowledge, but upon the ſide of *Wilfully*, *Turbulently*, *Obſtinately* and *Self-condemnedly* maintaining Inconſiſting Things with the Faith, Peace and Proſperity of the Church.

Granting

Granting us then not to be Obſtinate and Self-condemned Diſſenters, and you cannot reaſonably refuſe it us, how do you prove us Erroneous in the other Part? All Parties plead Scripture, and that for the moſt oppoſite Principle. The Scripture, you ſay, cannot determine the Senſe of it ſelf; it muſt have an Interpreter: If ſo, he muſt either be *Fallible* or *Infallible*: If the firſt, we are worſe then before; for Men are apt to be no leſs confident, and yet are ſtill upon as uncertain Grounds: If the laſt, this muſt either be an *external* or an *internal* Judge: If an *external*, you know where you are without pointing; for there ſtands nothing between you and *Popery* in that Principle: If an *internal* Judge, either it is our ſelves or the Spirit of Chriſt dwelling in us: Not our ſelves, for then the Rule would be the Thing ruled, which cannot be; and if it be the Spirit of Chriſt Jeſus, and the Apoſtle tells us, *That unleſs we have the Spirit we are none of Chriſt's*, then Rom. 8. is the Neck of Impoſition broken; and what haſt thou to do to judge me? Let me ſtand or fall to my own Maſter: And upon this Foot went *Luther*, *Zuinglius*, *Calvin*, *Melancton*, *Beza*, *Bullenger*, *Zanchius* abroad; and *Tindal*, *Barns*, *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, *Hooper*, *Jewel*, *Bradford*, *Philpot*, *Sanders*, *Rogers*, *&c.* at home; and as good Men, and conſtant Martyrs in Ages before them.

But ſuppoſe Conſcientious Diſſenters as ill Men as the Apoſtle deſcribes an *Heretick* to be; what is the Puniſhment? This is cloſe to the Point: Stand it.

3*dly*,

3*dly*, *A Man that is an Heretick after the first and second Admonition, reject*; that is, deny his Communion, declare he is none of you, condemn his Proceedings by a publick censure from among your selves. What more can be strained, by the fiercest Prosecutors of Men for Religion, out of these Words?

But will we be governed by the Rules of Holy Writ? Have we any true Veneration for the Exhortations and Injunctions therein? Then let us soberly consider, what the Apostle *Paul* advises and recommends to his beloved *Timothy* upon the present Occasion, and I dare promise an End to *Contest* and Persecution for Religion. *Flee Youthful Lusts; but follow Righteousness, Faith, Charity, Peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure Heart; but foolish and unlearned Questions avoid, knowing that they do gender* **Strifes**. And **the Servant of the Lord must not strive**, but **be Gentle unto all Men, apt to Teach, Patient, in Meekness Instructing those that oppose** *themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth.*

2 Tim. 2. 22, 23, 24, 25.

There is such a depth of Wisdom lodged in this one Passage, that I find difficulty to express my self upon it, and yet I shall with pleasure endeavour it. Here is both *Faith* and *Government*, *Religion* and *Duy*; all that becomes us towards God, our Brethren, our Neighbour, our Selves, yea, our Opposers and Enemies.

Flee Youthful Lusts: that is, avoid Sin, turn away from every Appearance of Evil, flee the Temptation as soon as thou seest it, lest it ensnare thee; but follow Righteousness, Charity and Peace; seek

and

and love Holineſs and there will be Charity and Peace to thy ſelf, and in thee, to all Men. For the *Kingdom of God ſtands in Righteouſneſs and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*; not in Conteſt about Words, nor in maintaining fooliſh and unlerned Queſtions, *which reach not the Soul*, nor carry any force upon our Affections, nor that learn not Men to be better, to have more *Piety*, *Vertue*, *Goodneſs*; but are meer Notions and Speculations, that have no influence upon Holy Living, or tendency to the Regiment of our Paſſions: Such Queſtions as the Curioſity or Wantonneſs of Men's Wit or reſtleſs Fancy are apt to ſtart under Pretence of Divine Truth, and Sublime Myſteries: Theſe Niceities, Conceits and Imaginations of Men (not bottomed on the Revelation of the Eternal Spirit, but Humane Apprehenſion and Tradition) *ſuch Queſtions avoid*, *meddle not with them*; but next to Youthful Luſts, flee them by all means; for they draw to *Strife*, to *Heats*, *Animoſities*, *Envy*, *Hatred* and *Perſecution*, which unbecome the Man of God: For ſays this Apoſtle, *He muſt not* **ſtrive**, *but be gentle unto* **all** *Men*, *apt to Teach*, *patient*: Let their Rank, Notion, Opinion or Faith be what it will, he muſt not be fierce, nor cenſorious, much leſs ſhould he perſecute or excite *Cæſar* to do it for him; no ſuch matter: *He muſt be apt to teach* and inform the Ignorant; and in caſe it ſucceed not, he ought not to be outragious, or go about to whip or club it into him: He muſt be *patient*, that is, he muſt not think to force and bend things to his own Will or Time, but commit his honeſt Endeavours to God's Bleſſing, *that can raiſe, of the Stones of the Streets,* Rom. 14. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 20.

Streets, Children unto Abraham. This ſort of man will ſerve God *againſt his Will*, inſtead of ſubmitting his Will to God's: There is no evil he will ſtick at to ſerve God his way, he will plunder and kill for God's ſake, and meritoriouſly ſend all his Paſſions upon the Errands of his ignorant zeal; and the Trophies that it loves, are the ſpoils and havock it makes upon mankind; the moſt unnatural and dangerous temper in the world. Our bleſſed Lord, that knew what was in man, has left us his Remark upon it, *John* 16. 12. The Want of this Patience has been the Undoing of all.

But ſome will object, *O but it is not Ignorance! 'tis Obſtinancy and Oppoſition*: Hardly judged, my Friend; but admit it were ſo; here's a Receipt for the Malady, and that of the Apoſtle's preſcribing. Obſerve the following words; *In Meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that Oppoſe themſelves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the acknowledging of the Truth.* Then not *Fining*, *Plundering*, *Beating*, *Stocking*, *Impriſoning*, *Baniſhing* and *Killing*, even Oppoſers themſelves, for Religion; unleſs there be a Way of doing theſe things with Gentleneſs, Patience and Meekneſs; which I confeſs I think no Body ever heard of.

But as the Apoſtle gives *Timothy* another Method then is now uſed by the Sons of Violence for reclaiming Oppoſers, ſo the Reaſon of the Counſel makes all other Wayes unlawful; viz. *If God peradventure will give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth.* I would hereupon enter the Liſt with a Perſecutor; Is Repentance in my own Power, or is it in thine to give me? The Apoſtle ſayes neither: 'Tis God's Gift alone; *If God peradventure*

peradventure will give them Repentance, &c. Since Repentance then is in the Caſe, and that God alone can give it, of what uſe are Violent Courſes, which never beget Repentance? on the contrary, they have rarely fail'd to raiſe Prejudice and beget Hardneſs in the ſufferer, and pitty in the beholder.

But was this the Evangelical Rule and practice? Yes, that it was; O then! whence comes *Impoſition, Force, Cruelty, Spoil of Goods, Impriſonments, Knockings, Beatings, Bruiſings, Stockings, Whippings, and Spilling of Blood for Religion*? What Church is that whoſe Officers are ſo far from clothing the Naked as they ſtrip the Clothed; from feeding the Hungry that they take their Bread from them; and thoſe, ſome of them, poor Widows and helpleſs Orphants? And ſo remote are they from viſiting the Sick and Impriſoned, that they drag away their Beds from under them, and caſt their Perſons into Priſon for Conſcience ſake. Nay, ſome have been ſo unnatural as they haled away an Honeſt Man from a Meeting to Goal at *Reading*, a while ſince, not permitting him to take Leave of his poor Wife, newly delivered, and in a Dying Condition, though ſhe much deſired it, and liv'd but juſt by the Meeting-houſe from whence they took him: with an hundred more things, that I forbear being perticular in, becauſe I would not be thought to provoke when only I aim at Chriſtian Reproof and Amendment. In fine, what are they that for no other Cauſe paſs ſuch *Dreadful Excommunications*, as render the Excommunicants little better then *Outlawed* Perſons, *ſubjecting* their *Civil* and *Natural Rights* to their Pride,

Pride, Paſſion, Intereſt or Revenge, unleſs they will purchaſe their Enjoyment at the dear rate of giving their own Conſciences the Lye? For what elſe can be the Conſequence of conforming to that I do not believe? Is not this to deſtroy ſincere Men, and make and ſave Hypocrites? When it is but too palpable that Vice reigns without Controul, and few of theſe buſie Men, theſe *Concientious-Hunters* give themſelves the thought of correcting Manners, defending Vertue, or ſuppreſſing Vice.

Oh, that ſuch as are concerned would ſoberly conſider if any Thing be ſo Scandalous to True Religion as Force! Who can think that Evidence Good that is extorted? And what a Church is that which is made up of ſuch Proſelytes, or that employes ſuch Means to make them? It is *baſe Coyn* that needs Impoſition to make it current, but true Mettal paſſeth for its own *intrinſick* value. O where is that *Chriſtian* Meekneſs, patience and Forbearance! How many have been ruined, that were never exhorted, and excommunicated before they were once admoniſhed? This is not to ſerve God, but Worldly Intereſt: Its quite contrary to Chriſt's Counſel and his Followers and Practice. He came to ſave, and not to deſtroy Nature to magnifie his Grace. You pretend moſt of you, to diſlike *J. Calvin's* unconditional Reprobation, yet practiſe it: If you ſay no, *Conformity* is your Condition: I anſwer, it is as unreaſonable to require an impoſſibility, as cruel to damn Men for not doing it: For as you ſay *his Doctrine makes God to command them to repent, that cannot repent, and yet damn them if they repent not*; So *you injoyn Men to relinquiſh their preſent*

preſent Faith and Worſhip, and conform to yours, which is not in their Power to do, yet damn them in a temporal reſpect if they refuſe it: For you make ſuch an unavoidable Diſſent, puniſhable with the Deſtruction of Mens Liberties and Eſtates. You had better leave off valuing your ſelves upon the Mercy and Well-natur'dneſs of that Tenet of the Univerſal Love of God to Mankind till you love more then your ſelves, and abominate that the Church of *England* ſhould be the Elect to the Civil Government and all others as Reprobates, ſince you pretend to deteſt the like Injuſtice in *John Calvin*'s Notion of Election and Reprobation.

And the Truth of it is, this helps on *Atheiſm* as much as any Enormity in the Land; when Witty Men, not willing to take Pains to examine after the Truth and Excellency in Religion, ſo that People that call themſelves Chriſt's Miniſters and the Apoſtles Succeſſors and Followers, affect and ſeek Government, and yet twice deny it, when they go to receive it: That ſome others grow Lordly, live Voluptuouſly, and watch after the biggeſt Preferments, not being excited by moſt Service for God, but Earthly Power and Wealth for themſelves; and that, at the ſame, Time they perſecute Men of more Self-Denyal, for matters of Opinion about Faith and Worſhip towards God; ſo that *Non-Conformity* to the Church, *No Protection* from the State. Which among *Proteſtants* is ſo much the more unreaſonable; *Firſt*, Becauſe they, by theſe Courſes, implicitly own and aſſume the higheſt Infallibility and Perfection, and yet deny any ſuch Thing. For it ſuppoſes that nothing is Truer, nothing Perfecter; or elſe they both perſecute Men to embrace a Fallible and

Imperfect Religion, and with cruel Penalties provide against any thing more true or Infallible; which is the greatest Injury to the World that can be, in as much as it is a plain Endeavour to frustrate all those excellent Prophecies and gracious Promises God hath given and the holy Scriptures declare of the latter Dayes. But *Secondly*, it exposes *Protestants* to the lash and scorn of the *Papist* unavoidably; for at this rate you that, with reason, think it Ignorance and Irreligion in the *Papist* to imagin himself discharged in God's account, by believing only as the Church believes, conceive your selves, at the same time, justified by believing only as a *few of your own Doctors*, or else as the *State* believes. But if the Church cannot use force in Religion, because she cannot Infallibly determin to the Conscience without convincement, much less ought a few *Doctors* or the Civil Authority to use force where they can much less judge. Unless you would make them the Civil Executioners of your displeasure who have no Civil Power to give them such Commission; and to be sure no Ecclesiastical Authority to Exercise any Force or Violence about Religion. For the *Papist*, judging by his Principles, punishes them that believe not as the Church believes, *though against Scripture*; but the *Protestant*, who teaches every one to believe the Scripture, *though against Church Authority*, persecutes, against his own Principles, even them that in any particular so believe as he, in general, teaches them to believe. This is hard, but true upon the *Protestant*; for what is plainer then that he afflicts *Those* that, according to his own Doctrine, believe and honour holy Scripture, but, against it, will receive no human Interpretation.

pretation. *Them* I ſay, who interpret Scripture to themſelves, *which, by his Poſition, none but they to themſelves can interpret*; *Them*, that uſe the Scripture no otherwiſe, by his own Doctrine, to their Edification, than He himſelf uſes it to their puniſhing; and ſo whom his Doctrine acknowledges true Believers, his Diſcipline perſecutes as Hereticks.

To ſum up all at this time, If we muſt believe as *Cæſar* appoints, why not than as the Church believes? But if not as either, *without Convincement*, pray how can force be lawful? Let me recommend one Book to you, that of Right claims a place with you, and that is *Biſhop Taylors* of *Liberty of Prophecy*; never anſwer'd that I have heard of, and I have reaſon to believe never will be attempted; for indeed it is unanſwerable. That was the Judgment of a Doctor under Perſecution, I could be glad if it might be the practice of Biſhops in their power: I may ſay the ſame of *J. Tillotſon*'s ſober and ſeaſonable diſcourſe before the Commons on the fifth of *November*. And, the truth is, I am the more earneſt with you at this time, becauſe I find that God daily ſhows us he has great *good will* to poor *England*. O why ſhould we drive him from us by our diſobedience to him, and our *Severities* to one another! He has lately put a Price into our hands, and continues to prove his favours upon us: All depends upon a ſincere Reformation and our perſeverance therein.

To give Teſtimony of this; *let us with our whole Hearts turn to God, and keep his holy Law*; and let us but be jealous of his Glory *by puniſhing Vice, and cheriſhing Virtue*, and we may aſſure our ſelves he will intereſt himſelf in our ſafety. Of this we cannot doubt; for he who has begun to do it under our

diſobedience will not deſert us in our ſincere Repentance. And as this is our duty to God, without which we vainly hope for deliverance, ſo is there a duty we owe to one another, that is the next requiſite to our preſervation.

Let, therefore, all *Aſperities* be avoided, *Nick-Names* forbidden, and the *oppreſſed Proteſtant* delivered. Revive the noble Principle of *Liberty of Conſcience*, on which the Reformation riſe: *For in Vain do we hope to be deliver'd from* Papiſts, *till we deliver our ſelves from* Popery. This *Coertion* upon *Conſcience* and *Perſecution* for *Religion* are that Part of *Popery* which is moſt juſtly hated and fear'd: And if we either fear or hate *Popery* for its Cruelty, *ſhall we practiſe the* **Cruelty** *we fear or hate it for?* God forbid! No, not on thoſe that have uſed it to us. This were the way to be deſerted of God, and left to their Cruelty. The ſame Sins will ever fix the ſame Odium, and find the ſame puniſhment where ever they are; yea greater, by how much *Proteſtants* pretend to better things: If they burnt your Anceſtors, don't you *ſtrip* and *ſtarve* your Brethren. Remember the many Thouſands now perſecuted in this Kingdom for the ſake of their tender and very peaceable Conſciences; *Husbands are unnaturally ſeparated from their Wives, and Parents from their Children, their Corn, Cattel and Houſhould-ſtuff ſwept away, perhaps at the Inſtigation of ſome lewd and indigent Informer, or to pleaſe the malice of an ill diſpos'd Neighbour.* In the mean time many, once ſufficient, are expos'd to Charity, the fruits of their honeſt Labour and Bread of their poor helpleſs Children being now made the Forfeiture of their Conſcience.

Friends and Country-men, there is a deep Doctrine in this preſent Providence; examine it well, that you may reap the benefit of it: And among the reſt, let me tell you, this is not the leaſt part of it, that *God is* ſhewing you Mercy, that *you may ſhew Mercy*, and has awaken'd you at the brink of the Pit, *that you may help your Brethren out of it*, ay, your Enemies. Be wiſe and conſiderate; It will be much your own fault if you are not happy. And truly I have no manner of ſcruple but God will preſerve us, if we will not caſt away our ſelves. For our own *Sins* and *Folly* can only *direct* the hand that ſeeks to Hit and Hurt us; and ſhall we make it ſucceſful to our own ruin? *Let us therefore turn away from all Impiety; let the Magiſtracy diſcourage and puniſh it; and let us forbear and love one another.* If we begin with God, we ſhall end with God, and that is *with Succeſs*: Elſe, be aſſured we ſhall only inherit the Wind of our own Invention, and be deſerted of him then when we ſhall moſt want him.

In ſhort, reverence the preſent providence; and though your Lives have not deſerv'd it, let them now be grateful and not abuſe it. Purſue your advantages throughly, but *wiſely*; Be as *Temperate* as zealous, and to your Enemies as generous as juſt. Inſult not over ill men for the ſake of their ill Principles, but pity their unhappineſs, whilſt you abhor the cauſe of it: Let them ſee that you had rather inform then deſtroy them, and that you take more pleaſure in their Converſion then your own Revenge. This will be the greateſt confutation

upon them, that they be taught the Goodneſs of your Religion by the mildneſs of it; and by its mercy the Cruelty of their own. The Indian *Arabaliba* rejected the *Romiſh Baptiſm* becauſe of the *Spaniſh Tyranny*; whence, it was uſual with thoſe poor *Americans* to deſire they might not go to *Heaven* if the *Spaniards* went thither. I know there be little Arts uſed to prevent *Preteſtant Union*, and that in a *Proteſtant* Guiſe; and 'tis a *Trick*, not of yeſterday, to put one Party of *Proteſtants* upon devouring four or five, that both the *Proteſtant* Church may have the Odium of *Eating* or *Devouring* her own *Children*, *and that another Intereſt*, *behind the Hangings*, may find the more eaſie and creditable acceſſion to the Chair: It is the Men of this Strain, though under diſguiſe, that now ſeek to diſtract you: and to effect it the better, old Stories muſt be had up, *Acts of Oblivion violated*, *the dead diſturb'd*, *their Tombs rifl'd and they hal'd out of their Graves to receive a new Sentence*: That Condemning the *Living* of that intereſt by the *Dead*, they might be deſerted of thoſe, that, to ſay true, cannot be long ſafe without them.

If any thing Sober and Judicious be propos'd for allaying Aſperities, accomodating Differences, and ſecuring to *Prince* and *People* a juſt and legal Union of Intereſt, as our Government requires, we muſt preſently be told of 41, and 42, as if there were a ſort of *Necromancy* in the numbers, or that the naming of thoſe *Figures* (long ſince made *Cyphers* by an *Act of Oblivion*) had power enough to *lay* the active and generous *Spirits* of our times: But they find themſelves miſtaken in their *black* Art, *and that*

Things

Things as well as Times are changed; The *Mask* is off, and he that runs may read. *Res Nolunt male Administrari.*

Men in their pleas and endeavours for Truth, Juſtice and Sincere Religion will not be overborn or ſtaggered by ſuch ſtale and trifling Reflections, rarely uſed, of late, but to palliate wretched Deſigns, or diſcredit good ones with men of weak Judgment, though perhaps of loyal Principles.

I beſeech you let us not be *unskilful* in theſe Tricks, that we may not be miſtaken or abuſed by them: I cannot tell a time in which the Minds of all ſorts of *Proteſtants* have been powerfully and unanimouſly enag'd to endeavour a good Underſtanding between the *King* and *People*: And as I am ſure it was never more needed, ſo, let me ſay, no Age hath put a richer Price into the Hands of Men, or yielded a fairer Occaſion to fix an happy and laſting Union upon: In order to which let me prevail with you that we may ſtudy to improve this great Principle as the neceſſary means to it, viz. *That God's Providence and our own Conſtitution have made the Intereſt of Prince and People* One; *and that their Peace and Greatneſs lie in a moſt induſtrous and impartial Proſecution of it.*

Thoſe that teach other Doctrine, as *that the Prince hath an Intereſt apart from the Good and Safety of the People*, are the ſole men that get by it, and therefore find themſelves oblig'd to *ſtudy* their *miſunderſtanding*, becauſe they only are diſappointed and inſecured by their *Union*.

Experience truly tells us that such Persons have another Interest than that which leads to a common Good, and are often but too *artificial* in interesting *Princes* in the success of it: But prudent and generous *Princes* have ever seen that it is neither safe nor just; and that no Kingdom can be govern'd with true Glory and success but there *where the Interest of the Governour is one with that of the Governed*, and where there is the strictest Care to steer all Transactions of State, *by the Fundamentals, or the first and great Principles of their own Constitution*: Especially, since swerving from them hath alwayes made way for Confusion and Misery in Government. Our own Stories are almost every where vext by this Neglect; and those of our Neighbours must submit to the same Truth.

To Conclude and sum up the whole Discourse; If you will both cure present and prevent future *Grievances*, it will greatly behove you to take a most delibearte and unbyass'd View of the present state of Things, with their proper *Causes* and *Tendencies*. Let us confront our *Ecclesiastical* Matters with the plain **Text** and **Letter** of holy **Scripture**; this is **Protestant**: And let us compare our **Civil** Transactions with the **Ancient Laws and Statutes** of the Realm; this is **English**. And I do humbly and heartily beseech Almightly God, that he would so dispose the Hearts of *Prince* and *People*, as firm Foundations may be now laid for a Just and Lasting Tranquility to these Nations: And believe me

if

if you pleaſe, unleſs they are Juſt and Equal they cannot laſt. Time will prove it, becauſe it alwayes has, and that God is unchangable in the order and Juſtice of his Providence.

And, ſince Righteouſneſs exalts a Nation, and that Sin is the ſhame of any People: therefore will I cloſe with *David's* Prayer, Pſal 7. 9. *O let the Wickedneſs of the Wicked come to an End, but Eſtabliſh the Juſt: For the Righteous God tryeth the Hearts and the Raines.* Prov. 13. 14.

AN

AN APPENDIX Of the *Cauſes* and *Cure* of PERSECUTION.

I Impute all Perſecution for Religion to theſe Seven inſuing Cauſes, though, properly ſpeaking, there is but one Original Cauſe of this *Evil*, and that is the *Devil*, as there is but one Original Cauſe of *Good*, and that is *God*.

I. The firſt Cauſe of Perſecution is this, *That the Authors and Uſers of it have little or no Religion at Heart*; They are not ſubject to the ground and firſt Cauſe of true Religion in their own Souls; for it is the part of true Religion to *humble* the Mind, *break* the Heart, and *ſoften* the Affection; It was God himſelf that ſaid, *Unto this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembles at My Word*; not one that breaks Pates and plunders Goods for Religion. *Bleſſed are they that Mourn, ſaid Chriſt, they ſhall be comforted*; but not Thoſe that ſell *Joſeph* and make Merry. *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of God*; Thoſe that are low in their own Eyes; not ſuch as devour and damn all but themſelves. *Bleſſed are the meek, for they ſhall inherit the*

Iſa. 66. 2.

the Earth; ſuch as are gentle and ready to help, and not Tyrannize over Neighbours. *Bleſſed are the Merciful, for they ſhall obtain Mercy*; what then ſhall become of thoſe that are Cruel, under pretence of doing it for Gods ſake? *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the Children of God*; then Diſturbers and Deſtroyers of their peaceable Neighbours ſhall not be called ſo. *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, for they ſhall be filled*; but not thoſe that hunger and thirſt after our Corn and Cattel, Houſes and Land for Conſcience ſake. *And Bleſſed are you*, ſays Chriſt, *when Men ſhall Revile and Perſecute you, &c.* Then not thoſe that Revile and Perſecute others, that are Sober and Harmleſs: Not one Bleſſing to this Conſcience-hunting Doctrine and Practice, that devour the Widow and Orphant for Religion. Were men inwardly and truly Religious, they would have ſo low an Opinion of themſelves, ſo tender a regard to mankind, ſo great an awe of Almighty, God as none of theſe froward Paſſions would have any ſway with them. But, the miſchief is, *unmortified Paſſions pretend to Religion*; a proud, Impatient, Arrogant mind would promote it; then which, nothing of Man is more remote from it; miſtaking the very Nature and End of Chriſt's peaceable Religion, *Which* if the Apoſtle *James* ſay true, *is to viſit the Fatherleſs and Widow, and keep our ſelves unſpotted of the World.* Jam. 1. 27. But, on the Contrary, They turn Widow and Fatherleſs out of Houſe and Home, and ſpot themſelves with the Cruelty and Injuſtice of uſurping their poor patremony; the Bread of their Lives, and Suſtenance of their Natures: Such men as theſe are void of natural Affection; their

Religion

Religion has no Bowels, or they are without Mercy in the Profeſſion of it; which is the *Revers* of true Religion, that *makes us love Enemies, do*
Mat 5. 44. *good to them that hate us, and pray for them that diſpightfully uſe us:* And ſo much ſtronger, in Souls truly Religious, is the power of Love to mankind then any ſelf revenging Paſſion, that from an humble and ſerious reflection upon the Mercies and Goodneſs of God to them, they do not only ſuppreſs any riſing of Heart againſt their Perſecutors (much more againſt peaceable Diſſenters) but, with much ſoftneſs and Charity, commiſerate their Ignorance and Anger: Offering to inform them, and praying that they may be forgiven. This is to be Religious, and therefore thoſe that Perſecute for Religion any ways are *Irreligious.*

II. The next Cauſe of Perſecution is the groſs but general miſtake which People are under concerning the Nature of the *Church* and *Kingdom* of Chriſt: For the lamentable Worldlineſs of mens minds hath put them upon thoſe Carnal conſtructions which have made way for all the external Coertion and Violence, uſed by bad and ſuffer'd by good Men, on the ſcore of Religion, from the beginning. And no wonder if ordinary Perſons tumble upon this Conſtruction, when the Diſciples of Jeſus ſhew'd themſelves ſo ill read in the Myſteries of his Kingdom, that after all the Intimacy they had had with him, they refrain'd not to ask, *When ſhall the Kingdom be reſtored to* Iſrael. They look't abroad, had a Worldly *Idea* in their minds; *Few* like, they waited for external deliverance from the Power of the *Romans*, rather then

then an Internal Salvation from the Dominion of *Satan*; and interpreted those Words to Worldly loss and freedom, which did relate to the loss and Redemption of the Soul: But Jesus taught them better things; yet so, as not to deny or flatly discourage and rebuke them; for that, though true, might have been more at that time, then they could have born; therefore he winds off with them upon the *Time* and the *Season* of the thing, knowing that the Time was at hand, that they should be better taught and satisfied of the nature of his Kingdom, unto which he referred them. *When the Spirit of Truth comes, it shall lead you into all Truth, &c.* John 16. 13.

That the *Kingdom* of Christ is not of this World, has been before observed, and the Reason is so great that all Men of Common Sense must allow it, upon Christ's Principle and Argument; for says he, *then would my Servants fight for me*; truly implying, because the Kingdoms of this World are evidently set up and maintained by Worldly Force, and that he will have no Worldly Force used in the Business of his Kingdom, that therefore it is not of this World. Consequently, those that attempt to set up his Kingdom by Worldly Force, or make that their Pretence to use it, are none of his Servants: They are truly but Men of this World; such as seek an Earthly, and not an Heavenly Crown and Kingdom: Themselves, and not Christ Jesus. Where, by the way, let me observe, that though the *Jews*, to engage *Pilate* the more easily to their side, impeach't *Christ* of being an Enemy to *Cæsar*, they were Enemies, and *He* appeared a *Friend* to John 18. 36.

Cæsar

Cæſar's ; for he came to reform the Lives of Men, to make them better Subjects ; to obey *Cæſar*, not for Fear, but for *Conſcience ſake* : Away to make *Cæſar's* Province, both eaſie and ſafe. But the *Jews* would have had him *Cæſar's* Enemy ; one that ſhould have *forceably* reſcu'd them from *Cæſars* Power; That was what they waited for ; *a Captain General* to and head the *Revolt*, and with and High Hand to overbear and captive *Cæſar*, as he had done them: And, 'tis more than probable, that this Appearance being after quite an other manner and to another end then they expected ; They therefore rejected him ; their Heart being ſet upon the deſire of Wordly Empire.

But to return ; Chriſt told his Diſciples, *that he had choſen them out of the World* ; how pray ? Not to converſe or live bodly in it ? No ſuch matter : But he had choſen or *ſingled them from the Nature, Spirit, Glory, Policy and Pomp of this World.* How Perſons, ſo qualified, can make a Worldly Church or Kingdom, unleſs they deſert Chriſt's Doctrine, is paſt my Skill to tell. So that the Capacity that Chriſtians ſtand in to Chriſt is *Spiritual*, and not Worldly or Carnal ; and for that reaſon not Carnal or Worldly, but Spiritual Methods and Weapons only are to be uſed to inform or reclaim ſuch as are Ignorant or Diſobedient. And if we will give Antient Story credit, we ſhall find that Worldly Weapons were never employed by the Chriſtian Church till ſhe became *Worldly*, and ſo ceaſt to be truly Chriſtian.

But why ſhould I ſay the *Church* ? the moſt abuſed word in the World ; It is her Leaders have

have taught her to err; and that of *believing as the Church believes*, is ſo far from being true in point of Fact as well as Reaſon, that the Church her ſelf has long believed as the Clergy; that is, the *Prieſt*, believed, ever ſince that ſort of Men have practiſed a Diſtinction from and Superiority upon the Laity. He that will perſue the Eccleſiaſtical Story delivered us by *Euſebius Pamphili*, *Socrates Scholaſticus*, *Evagrius*, *Ruffinus*, *Sozomen*, and more eſpecially the *Councils*, B. *Uſher*, ay and *Barronius himſelf*, will find but too many and ſad Inſtances of the Truth of this.

In ſhort, People apprehending the Church and Kingdom of Chriſt to be *Viſible* and *Worldly*, like other Societies and Governments, have thought it not only to be Lawful, but Neceſſary to uſe the Arts and Force of *this World* to ſupport his Church and Kingdom; eſpecially ſince the Intereſt of Religion hath been incorporated with that of the *Civil Magiſtrate*: For from that time he hath been made *Cuſtos utriuſque Tabulæ*, and ſuch as offend, though about Church Matters, have been reputed Tranſgreſſors againſt the *State*, and conſequently the *State* intereſted in puniſhing the Offence. Whereas had *Chriſtians* remain'd in their primitive Simplicity and Purity, in the Self-denying, Patient and Suffering Doctrine of *Chriſt*; Chriſtianity had ſtood in Holy Living and not in Worldly Regement; and its Compulſion would have been Love, its Arms Reaſon and Truth, and its utmoſt Rigour, even to obſtinate Enemies or Apoſtates, but Renouncing of their Communion, and that not till much Forbearance and many Chriſtian endeavours had been uſed to reclaim them.

To

To ſum up all; The Kingdoms of this World ſtand in outward, Bodily and Civil Matters, and here the Laws and Power of Men reach and are effectual. But the Kingdom and Church of Chriſt, that is choſen out of the World, ſtands not in *Bodily Exerciſe* (which the Apoſtle ſays profits little) nor in Times nor Places, but in *Faith*, and that *Worſhip* which Chriſt tells us is in *Spirit* and in *Truth:* To this no Worldly Compulſion can bring or force Men; 'tis only the Power of that King of Righteouſneſs whoſe Kingdom is in the Minds and Souls of the *Juſt*, and he rules by the Law of his own free Spirit, which like the Wind, *Bloweth where it liſteth:* And as without this Spirit of *Regeneration* no Man can be made a Member of Chriſts Church or Kingdom, and leſs a Miniſter, ſo neither is it in the Power of Man to command or give it, and conſequently all Worldly force employ'd to make Men Members of Chriſt's Church and Kingdom is as inefectual as unnatural. I could be very large upon this point, for it is very fruitful, and ſo much the cauſe of Perſecution, that if there were never another to be aſſign'd, this were enough; and upon due conſideration it muſt needs meet with every Man's Judgment and Experience, I will here add the ſenſe of memorable *Hales* of *Eaton* upon this ſubject.

1 Tim. 4.8.

Joh. 4.23,24.

Joh. 3.8

'When

'When our Saviour, in the *Acts*, after his Re-
'surrection, was Diſcourſing to his Diſciples con-
'cerning the Kingdom
'of God, they preſently
'brake forth into this
'Queſtion, *Wilt thou now*
'*reſtore the Kingdom unto*
'Iſrael? Certainly this
'Queſtion betrays their Ignorance: Their thoughts
'ſtill ran upon a Kingdom *like unto the Kingdoms of*
'*the World*, notwithſtanding they had ſo long and
'ſo often heard our Saviour to the contrary: Our
'Saviour therefore ſhortly takes them up, *Non eſt*
'*veſtrum*, your Queſtion is nothing to the purpoſe;
'the Kingdom that I have ſpoken of is *another*
'*manner of* Kingdom, then you conceive. Sixteen
'hundred Years, *& quod excurrit*, hath the Goſpel
'been preached unto the World, and is this ſtain
'ſpunged out yet? I doubt it. Whence ariſe thoſe
'novel and late Diſputes, *de notis Eccleſiæ*, of the
'notes and *viſibility* of the Church? Is it not from
'hence they of *Rome* take the World and the
'Church to be like *Mercury* and *Soſia* in *Plautus* his
'Comedies, ſo like one another, that one of them
'muſt wear *a Toy* in his Cap, that ſo the Spectators
'may diſtinguiſh them; whence comes it that they
'ſtand ſo much upon *State* and *Ceremony* in the
'Church? Is it not from hence, that they think
'the Church muſt come in like *Agrippa* and *Bernice*
'in the *Acts* μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας, as St. *Luke* ſpeaks,
'with a *great deal of Pomp*, and Train, and Shew,
'and Vanity? and that the Service of God doth
'neceſſarily require this noiſe and tumult of out-
'ward State and Ceremony? Whence comes it,

J. Hales *Golden Eſſays*, in his Sermon upon *John* 18. ver. 36. pag. 153, 154, 155.

'that we are at our Wits end, when we ſee Per-
'ſecution, and Sword, and Fire to rage againſt the
'true Profeſſors of the Goſpel? Is it not becauſe, as
'theſe bring Ruin and Deſolation upon the King-
'doms of the World, ſo we ſuppoſe they work
'no other effect in the Kingdom of Chriſt? All
'theſe Conceits, and many more of the like Na-
'ture, ſpring out of no other Fountain then that
'*old inveterate Error*, which is ſo hardly wiped out
'of our Hearts; That the *State* of the *Church* and
'Kingdom of Chriſt doth hold ſome *proportion*,
'ſome *likeneſs* with the *State* and *managing of tem-*
'*poral Kingdoms*: Wherefore to pluck out of our
'Hearts, *opinionem tam inſitam, tam vetuſtam*, a
'Conceit ſo ancient, ſo deeply rooted in us, our
'Saviour ſpake moſt excellently, moſt pertinently,
'and moſt fully, when he tells us that
Joh. 18. 36. 'his *Church*, that his *Kingdom is not*
'*of this World*.

'In which Word of his there is contained the
'true art of diſcovering and knowing the true
'Nature and Eſſence of the *Church*. For as they
'which make *Statues*, cut and pare away all Super-
'fluities of the matter upon which they work;
'ſo our Saviour, to ſhew us the true proportion
'and feature of the *Church*, prunes away the *World*
'and all ſuperfluous Excreſcencies, and ſends her
'to be ſeen, as he did our firſt Parents in Paradiſe,
'*ſtark naked*: As thoſe *Elders* in the *Apocryphal*
'Story of *Suſanna*, when they would ſee her Beau-
'ty, commanded to take off her Mask; ſo he that
'longs to ſee the Beauty of the *Church*, muſt pull
'of that *Mask* of the *World* and outward ſhew.
'For as *Juda* in the Book of *Geneſis*, when *Thamar*
'ſat

'ſat Vail'd by the Way-ſide knew not his Daugh-
'ter from an Whore; ſo whilſt the *Church*, the
'Daughter and Spouſe of Chriſt, *ſits vail'd*
'*with the World*, and *Pomp* and *Shew*, it will
'be an hard matter to diſcern her from
'an *Harlot*. But yet further, to make the diffe-
'rence betwixt theſe Kingdoms the more plainly
'to appear, and ſo better to fix in your Memo-
'ries, I will briefly touch ſome of theſe Heads, in
'which they are moſt notoriouſly differenced.

'The firſt Head wherein the Difference is ſeen,
'are the Perſons and *Subjects* of this Kingdom:
'For as the *Kingdom* of *Chriſt is not of this World*,
'ſo the *Subjects* of this *Kingdom* are *Men* of *another*
'*World*, and not of this. Every one of us bears a
'*double* Perſon, and accordingly is the *Subject* of a
'double Kingdom: The Holy Ghoſt by the Pſal-
'miſt divides Heaven and Earth betwixt God and
'Man, and tells us, as for God, *He is in Heaven,*
'*but the Earth has he given to the Children of Men:*
'So hath the ſame Spirit, by the Apoſtle St. *Paul*,
'divided every one of our Perſons into Heaven
'and Earth, into an outward and *earthly* Man,
'and into an inward and *heavenly* Man: This *Earth*,
'that is, this *Body* of Clay hath he given to the
'*Sons of Men*, to the *Princes* under whoſe Govern-
'ment we live; but *Heaven*, that is, the *inward*
'and *ſpiritual Man*, hath he reſerved unto *himſelf*:
'They can reſtrain the *outward Man*, and mode-
'rate our *outward Actions* by *Edicts* and *Laws*; they
'can tye our *Hands* and our *Tongues*; — *Illa ſe-*
'*jactat in aula Æolus*: Thus far they can go, and
'when they are gone thus far, they can go no far-
'ther: But to rule the *inward Man* in our *Hearts*

'and *Souls*, to ſet up an Imperial Throne in our *Un-*
'*derſtandings* and Wills, this part of our Govern-
'ment belongs to *God* and to *Chriſt* : Theſe are
'the Subjects, this the Government of his King-
'dom : Men may be Kings of Earth and Bodies,
'but Chriſt alone is the King of Spirits and Souls.
'Yet this *inward Government* hath influence upon
'our *outward Actions* : For the Authority of Kings
'over our outward Men is not ſo abſolute, but
'that it ſuffers a great Reſtraint ; it muſt ſtretch
'no farther then the Prince of our inward Man
'pleaſes : For if ſecular Princes ſtretch out the
'Skirts of their Authority to command ought by
'which our Souls are prejudiced, the King of
'Souls hath in this caſe given us a greater Com-
'mand, *That we rather Obey God then Men.*

IIIdly, A third great Cauſe of Perſecution for Religion is this, *that Men make too many things neceſſary to be believed to Salvation and Communion. Perſecution* entred with **Creed-Making** ; for it ſo falls out, that thoſe who diſtinguiſh the Tree in the bulk, cannot with the like eaſe diſcern every Branch or Leaf that grows upon it ; and to run out the neceſſary Articles of Faith to every good or true thing that the Wit of Man may deduce from the Text, and ſo too, as that I ought to have a diſtinct *Idea*, or *Apprehenſion* of every one of them, and muſt run them over in my mind as a Child would con a Leſſon by Heart, of which I muſt not miſs a tittle upon my Salvation ; this I think to be a Temptation upon Men to fall into Diſpute and Diviſion, and then we are taught, by long Experience, that he that has moſt Power will

will oppreſs his Opinion that is weaker; whence comes Perſecution: This certainly puts Unity and Peace too much upon the Hazard. *Mary*'s Choice therefore was not of many things, *but the one thing neceſſary*, as Chriſt terms it, the Lord of the true Divinity. And pray what was this one needful thing, *but Chriſt Jeſus himſelf, and her Faith, Love and Obedience in and to him*? Here is no perplext Creed to ſubſcribe, no *Syſtem* of *Divinity* to charge the Head with; this *One needful thing* was *Mary*'s Choice and Bleſſing: May it be ours, and, I ſhould hope a quick End to Controverſies, and conſequently to Perſecutions. Luke 10. 42.

IV*thly*, Another Cauſe of Perſecution, is *The Prejudice of Education, and that Byaſs Tradition gives to thoſe Men, who have not made their Religion the Religion of their Judgment*: For ſuch will forbid all the Inquiry which might queſtion the Weakneſs or Falſhood of their Religion, and had rather be deceiv'd in an honourable Decent, then be ſo uncivil to the memory of their Anceſtors as to ſeek the Truth, which found, muſt reprove the Ignorance of their Ages; of this, the vaineſt of all Honours, they are extream careful; and at the very mention of any thing, to them new, though as old as Truth, and older then this World, are eaſily urg'd into a Tempeſt, and are not appeaſed but by a *Sacrifice*. This Ignorance and want of Inquiry helps on Perſecution.

V*thly*, Another Reaſon, and that no ſmall one, is *Self-love* and *Impatiency of Men under contradiction*,

be it of Ignorance, that they are angry without what they cannot refute, or out of private Intereſt, it matters not: Their Opinion muſt reign alone, they are tenacious of their own ſenſe and can't indure to have it queſtion'd, be there never ſo much reaſon for it. Men of theſe Paſſions are yet to learn that they are Ignorant of Religion, by the want they have of Mortification; ſuch Perſons can eaſily let go their hold on Charity to lay Violent hands upon their Oppoſers: If they have power, they rarely fail to uſe it ſo; not remembring, that when they abſolv'd themſelves from the tye of Love, Meekneſs and Patience, they abandoned true Religion, and contended not for the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints, which ſtood therein, but for meer Words.

It is here that proud Fleſh and a capricious Head diſputes for Religion, and not an humble Heart and a divine frame of Spirit. *Men that are angry for God, Paſſionate for Chriſt, that can call Names for Religion, and fling Stones for Faith*, may tell us they are *Chriſtians* if they will, but no body would know them to be ſuch by their Fruits; to be ſure they are no *Chriſtians* of Chriſt's making.

I would to God that the Diſputants of our time did but calmly weigh the *Irreligiouſneſs* of their own *Heats* for Religion, and ſee if what they contend for will quit the Coſt, will countervail the Charge of *departing* from Charity and making a Sacrifice of Peace to gain their point. Upon ſo ſeaſonable a reflection I am confident they would find that they rather ſhow their love to Opinion then Truth, and ſeek Victory more then Concord.

Could

Could men be contented, as he whom they call their Lord was, *to declare their Meſſage, and not ſtrive for Proſelites nor vex for Conqueſt*, they would recommend all to the Conſcience, and, if it muſt be ſo, patiently endure Contradiction too, and ſo lay their Religion, as he did his, not in Violence but Suffering: But I muſt freely profeſs, and in duty and Conſcience I do it, that I cannot call that Religion which is introduced againſt the Laws of Love, Meekneſs and Friendſhip: *Superſtition*, *Intereſt* or *Faction* I may.

There is a Zeal without Knowledge, that is *Superſtition*; there is a Zeal againſt Knowledge, that is *Intereſt* or *Faction*, the true *Hereſie*; there is a Zeal with Knowledge, that is *Religion*; therefore *blind* obedience may be ſuperſtition, it can't be Religion; And if you will view the Countries of Cruelty, you ſhall find them Superſtitious rather then Religious. *Religion* is *gentle*, it makes men *better*, more Friendly, Loving and Patient then before. And the ſucceſs, which followed *Chriſtianity*, whilſt the antient Profeſſors of it betook themſelves to no other defence, plainly proves both the force of thoſe paſſive Arguments above all corporal Puniſhments, and that we muſt never hope for the ſame Proſperity *till we fall into the ſame Methods.* Are men impatient of having their conceits own'd? they are then moſt to be ſuſpected. Error and Superſtition, like crackt Titles, *only fear to be Searcht, and run ayd cry for Authority and Number.* Truth is plain and ſtedfaſt, without Arts or Tricks; will you receive her, well; if not, there is no compulſion. But, pray tell me, what is that deſired Uniformity

Gal. 5. 22. James 3. 17.

that has not Unity, and that Unity, which has not Love, Meekneſs and Patience in it? I beſeech you hear me, for thoſe men depart from the *Spirit* of *Chriſtianity* that ſeek with Anger and Frowardneſs to promote it. Let us not put ſo miſerable a Cheat upon our ſelves, nor ſuch an affront upon *Chriſtianity* as to think *That a moſt gentle and patient Religion can be advanc'd by moſt ungentle and impatient Wayes.* I ſhould ſooner ſubmit to an humble oppoſition then to the greateſt Zealot in the World, and rather deliver my ſelf up to him that would, modeſtly, drop a controverted Truth, then to ſuch as ſeek tempeſtuouſly to carry it; for even Error, baſhfully and patiently defended, endangers Truth in the management of impudent and haſty Zeal; and gives to it that Luſtre which only good Eyes can ſee from Gold. Alas! it is for want of Conſidering that men don't ſee that to diſorder the mind in Controverſie is a greater miſchief then to carry the point can be a benefit; inaſmuch as it is not to be Religious to apprehend rightly, but to do well: The latter can ſcarcely be without the former, but the former often is without the latter, which brings me to my ſixth Cauſe of Perſecution.

VI. Another, and that no ſmall cauſe of *Perſecution, is a miſapprehenſion of the word* **Religion.** For when once the Ignorance or Prejudice of men has perſwaded them to lay more weight upon their own *Opinion* or *Diſſent* of their Neighbours then in truth the thing will bear, to excuſe their Zeal or juſtifie their Spleen or credit, they preſently heighten the difference to a *new Religion*; whence we ſo frequently hear of ſuch reflections as theſe, *new Goſ-*

pels

pels and *Faiths*, *upſtart Religions and Lights*, and with the like *Scare-crows* amuſe the Vulgar and render their own deſign of ruining honeſt men the more practicable. But I would obviate this miſchief; for a *new Religion* has a *new Foundation*, and Conſequently where there is the *ſame Foundation*, there cannot be a *new Religion*. Now the Foundation of the *Chriſtian* Religion is *Chriſt*, and that only is another Religion then the *Chriſtian* which profeſſes another Foundation, or corruptly adds to that Foundation; by adding of other Mediators and introducing a new way of Remiſſion of Sin: Which at leaſt cannot be ſaid of the ſeveral ſorts of *Proteſtants*? For *Proteſtants* therefore to reproach each other with *new Religions and Goſpels*, and by their Indecent and Unchriſtian behaviour to enflame their own Reckoning and draw into more diſcord, is a Sin againſt God, an Injury to the common Cauſe of *Proteſtancy* and the Security of the Civil Intereſt of that Country, where the Inhabitants are of that Religion, as well as a real Injuſtice to one another: For *Proteſtants* don't only agree in the *ſame Fundamentals* of *Chriſtiaty*, but of *Proteſtancy* too, that is, in the reaſons of Separation from *Rome*, which was alſo *Chriſtian*. Let not every circumſtantial difference or Variety of *Cult* be *Nicknamed a new Religion*, neither ſuffer ſo ill an uſe to be made of ſuch Diſſents as to carry them beyond their true bounds; for the meaning of thoſe Arts of ill men, is to ſet the People further off from one another then they really are, and to aggrevate Differences in Judgment to Contrariety in affection: And when they have once inflam'd them to Variance and Strife, nothing can hinder Perſecution but want of Power; which being never

ver wanted by the ſtrongeſt ſide, the weakeſt, though trueſt, is oppreſt, not by *Argument* but *Worldly Weapons.*

VII. The *ſeventh* and *laſt* Cauſe I ſhall now aſſign for Perſecution is this, *That* **holy living** *is become no Teſt among us, unleſs againſt the liver.* The Tree was once known by its Fruits, It is not ſo now: The better Liver, the more dangerous, *if not a Conformiſt*, and ſo the more in danger, and this has made way for Perſecution. There was a time, when Virtue was Venerable and good Men admired; but that is too much derided, and Opinion carries it.

He that can perſwade his Conſcience to comply with the times, *be he Vitious, Knaviſh, Cowardly, any thing*, he is protected, perhaps preferr'd. A Man of Wiſdom, Sobriety and Ability to ſerve his King and Country, *if a Diſſenter*, muſt be blown upon for a *Phanatick*, a man of *Faction*, of *diſloyal* Principles, and what not?

Rewards and Puniſhments are the Magiſtrates duty and the Governments *intereſt and ſupport.* Rewards are due to Virtue, Puniſhments to Vice. Let us not miſtake nor miſcal things; let Virtue be what it always was in Government, *good Manners, ſober and Juſt Living*; and Vice, *ill Manners and diſhoneſt Living.* Reduce all to this; Let *ſuch Good Men have the Smiles and Rewards, and ſuch Ill Men the Frowns and Puniſhments of the Government*: This ends Perſecution, and lays Opinion to ſleep. Ill men will make no more advantages by ſuch Conformity, nor good men no more ſuffer for want of it.

In

In ſhort; As that Religious Society deſerves not the Protection of the Civil Government which is inconſiſtent with the Safety of it; ſo thoſe Societies of Chriſtians that are not only not Deſtructive of the Civil Government, but Lovers of it, ought, by the Civil Government, to be ſecured from Ruin.

God Almighty open our Underſtandings and Hearts, and pour out the *Spirit of thorow Reformation* upon us; for it is in the *Spirits*, and not in the words of Reformation that the Life and Proſperity of Reformation ſtands; that ſo we may be all Conſcientiouſly Diſpos'd to ſeek and purſue thoſe things which make for Love, Peace and Godlineſs, that it may be well with us and ours, both here and forever.

For yet a little while and the Wicked ſhall not be; *yea, thou ſhalt diligently conſider his place, and it ſhall not be; but the* Meek *ſhall* inherit the Earth, *and ſhall delight themſelves in abundance of Peace. The Wicked* Plotteth *againſt the Juſt, and gnaſheth upon him with his Teeth; the Lord ſhall laugh at him; for he ſeeth that his Day is* Coming, Pſal. 37. 10, 11, 12, 13.

The

The Judgment of King *James* and King *Charles* the firſt about Perſecution for Religion.

WE find it aſſerted by King *James* in his Speech to the Parliament in the year 1609. *That it is a pure Rule in Divinity, That God never loves to plant his Church with* Violence *and* Blood; and furthermore ſaid, *It was uſually the Condition of* Chriſtians *to be* Perſecuted, *but not to* Perſecute.

And we find the ſame things in ſubſtance aſſerted again by his Son, King *Charles* the firſt, in his Book known by the Name ΠΙΚΩΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΗ, printed for *R. Royſton*, as followeth.

Pag. 67. In his Prayer to God he ſaid, *Thou ſeeſt how much* Cruelty *amongſt* Chriſtians, *is acted under the colour of Religion; as if we could not be* Chriſtians, *unleſs we Crucifie one another.*

Pag. 28. *Make them at length ſeriouſly to conſider, that nothing* Violent *and* Injurious, *can be Religion.*

Pag

Pag. 70. *Nor is it ſo proper to hew out Religious Reformations by the* Sword, *as to poliſh them by* fair *and* equal Diſputations, *among thoſe that are moſt concerned in the Differences, whom, not Force but Reaſon ought to convince.*

Sure in Matters of Religion, thoſe Truths gain moſt upon mens Judgments and Conſcienees, which are leaſt urged with Secular Violence, *which weakens Truth with Prejudices.*

Pag. 115. *It being an Office not only of Humanity, rather to uſe* Reaſon *than* Force, *but alſo of* Chriſtianity *to ſeek* Peace *and* enſue *it.*

Some Words of Advice from King *Charles* the firſt, to the then Prince of *Wales*, now King of *England*, &c.

Pag. 165. *My Counſel and Charge to you is, That you ſeriouſly conſider the former Real or Objected Miſcarriages, which might occaſion my Troubles, that you may avoid them, &c.*

Beware of Exaſperating *any Faction, by the* Croſneſs *and* Aſperity *of ſome mens* Paſſions, Humours *and* private Opinions, *imployed by you,*

You, grounded only upon Differences in leſſer matters, which are but the Skirts and Suburbs of Religion, *wherein a charitable* Connivance and Chriſtian Toleration, *often diſſipates their Strength, when rougher Oppoſition fortifies, and puts the Deſpiſed and Oppreſſed Party into ſuch Combinations, as may moſt enable them to get a full Revenge on thoſe they count their Perſecutors.*

Pag. 166. *Take heed that Outward Circumſtances and Formalities of Religion devour not all.*

ERRATA.

Page 10. *l.* 16. *to* dele. p. 13. l. 27. r. *Inlayings*. p. 23. l. 30. *that* dele. p. 34. l. 2. *both* dele. p. 36. l. 13. r. *Thermopolæ*. p. 38. *l.* 6. r. *their Example*. p. 38. l. 26. r. *they were*. p. 43. l. 24. r. *have had*. p. 51. l. 31. r. *deſpiſe*. p. 52. l. 14. r. *degree*. p. 61. l. 30. *to* dele. p. 64. l. 27. r. *Councils*. p. 80. *l.* 24. r. *themſelves*. p. 96. *l.* 12. r. *Sence*. p. 116. *l.* 24. r. *Blameleſneſs*. p. 131. *l.* 4. r. *Saviours*. p. 141. *l.* 19. *it* dele. p. 170. *l.* 12. r. *vertue*. p. 181. *l.* 24. r. *plainly*. p. 182. *l.* 16. r. *aime*. p. 183. *l.* 5. r. *it came*. p. 187. *l.* 11. *what* dele. p. 198. *l.* 14. r. *man*. p. 212. *l.* 19. r. *cut off*. p. 217. l. 18. r. *Government*.